

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

Fifth Series, }
Volume XXXVII. }

No. 1971. — March 31, 1882.

{ From Beginning,
Vol. CLII. }

CONTENTS.

I. MONKEYS. By Alfred R. Wallace, . . .	<i>Contemporary Review</i> , . . .	771
II. THE FRERES. By Mrs. Alexander, author of "The Wooing O't." Part XXX., . . .	<i>Temple Bar</i> , . . .	780
III. MISS FERRIER'S NOVELS, . . .	<i>Fortnightly Review</i> , . . .	786
IV. HOW GILBERT SHERARD FARED IN THE FLOOD, . . .	<i>Fraser's Magazine</i> , . . .	797
V. THE VISTAS OF THE PAST: THE MOON AND THE EARTH, . . .	<i>Contemporary Review</i> , . . .	810
VI. THE POETRY OF DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI, . . .	<i>Fraser's Magazine</i> , . . .	817
VII. MARCH IN THE COUNTRY, . . .	<i>Saturday Review</i> , . . .	822

* * * Title and Index to Volume CLII.

POETRY.

YELLOW CROCUSES, . . .	770	DREAMERS, . . .	770
SUNSHINE, . . .	770	BREAD OF TEARS, . . .	770

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY
LITTELL & CO., BOSTON.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

FOR EIGHT DOLLARS, *remitted directly to the Publishers*, the LIVING AGE will be punctually forwarded for a year, *free of postage*.

Remittances should be made by bank draft or check, or by post-office money-order, if possible. If neither of these can be procured, the money should be sent in a registered letter. All postmasters are obliged to register letters when requested to do so. Drafts, checks and money-orders should be made payable to the order of LITTELL & Co.

Single Numbers of THE LIVING AGE, 18 cents.

YELLOW CROCUSES.

THE wind has wailed itself to rest,
A watery glory fills the west,
Where drops the dying sun;
Among the trees the thrushes sing,
The finch and blackbird pipe of spring
And gladness new begun.

The sparrow twitters in the eaves,
The lilac shakes her dripping leaves,
New leaves of palest green;
Upon the lawn the daisies grow,
And in the borders all a-row
The crocuses are seen.

Bright flowers and brave! the wind hath blown
All day with ceaseless sob and moan
About your slender forms;
All day each golden head was bent,
While March's passion found a vent
In cruellest of storms.

Yet no gold petals strew the ground,
The old box-borders fenced you round
From wind and driving showers;
The green box-borders, older far
By many a decade than ye are,
My yellow spring-time flowers!

Ye bent full meekly to the blast,
And now the storm is overpast;
The silver drops of rain
Fall from your petals one by one,
As towards the slowly dying sun
Ye lift your heads again.

Bent, but not broken, by the storm,
Ye look again for sunshine warm,
For spring's refreshing breeze;
For busy brown bee flitting by,
For fairy kiss of butterfly,
For music in the trees.

And with to-morrow these shall come,
The sunshine and the wild bees' hum,
The butterfly's white wing;
And my brave golden flowers shall share
With all sweet things in earth and air
The gladness of the spring.

Ah, bonnie flowers! ye mind me well
Of that old sorrow which befell
My heart in early years;
The storm that vexed me in my youth,
That shook my faith in love and truth,
That rained in bitter tears!

But old love fenced me from the blast,
And when the bitter storm was overpast,
Among life's freshening bowers
I lifted up my drooping head,
And not one tender leaf was shed
Of love's own golden flowers.

Bent, but not broken by the storm,
I turned me to the sunshine warm,
And smiled at life again;
The old box-borders screened the flowers,
Love sheltered me in those far hours
From sorrow's wind and rain!

All the Year Round.

SUNSHINE.

We called her Sunshine, for her golden hair,
Her dove-grey eyes, her rosy lips, all shone
And gleamed with radiance, as from orb more
fair
Than e'en the sun in heaven to look upon.

There was no dark in all her life; her bliss
Was fully bliss, and where her home she
made
No shadow fell; for, like the sun in this,
Her brightness could not bear to look on
shade.

Our hearts turned to her, as till day be gone
To the dear sun the eyes of flowers are
given;
She was our sunshine; in her light we shone,
As all our earth glows in the light of heaven.

We know the light was over-great for earth
Of her pure innocence and guileless love.
Methinks the sun is brighter in yon sky
Since our sweet Sunshine dwelleth there
above!

DREAMERS.

WHY do thy lingering lips in love's caress
These faded scentless blossoms fondly press?
Thrown in the dust, forgot and cast aside
By her upon whose gentle breast they died —
Think'st thou their bloom may be again re-
newed
When by thy tears of love they are bedewed?
Thou dreamer! by a withered leaf beguiled,
Plucked off in playtime by a pretty child —

Fantastic dreamer, do thy thoughts yet cling
About that corpse, poor faded, pallid thing?
What can thy kisses and thy tears awaken?
Hath it not been forgotten and forsaken
By the fair soul who fled in haste away,
When she had used it for an hour of play?

Temple Bar.

LENAU.

(Translated by C. B.)

BREAD OF TEARS.

THOU turnest all my hopes to fears,
My peace to strife;
Thou feedest me with bread of tears,
Lord of life!

Thou dimm'st mine eyes, thou dull'st mine ears,
Thou tak'st my breath;
Thou feedest me with bread of tears,
Lord of death!

My soul thou humblest till it hears,
And looks above;
Thou feedest me with bread of tears,
Lord of love!

AUTHOR OF "GIDEON'S ROCK."

Day of Rest.

From The Contemporary Review.
MONKEYS.

If the skeletons of an orang-utan and a chimpanzee be compared with that of a man, there will be found the most wonderful resemblance, together with a very marked diversity. Bone for bone, throughout the whole structure, will be found to agree in general form, position, and function, the only absolute differences being that the orang has nine wrist bones, whereas man and the chimpanzee have but eight; and the chimpanzee has thirteen pairs of ribs, whereas the orang, like man, has but twelve. With these two exceptions, the differences are those of shape, proportion, and direction only, though the resulting differences in the external form and motions are very considerable. The greatest of these are, that the feet of the anthropoid or man-like apes, as well as those of all monkeys, are formed like hands, with large opposable thumbs fitted to grasp the branches of trees but unsuitable for erect walking, while the hands have weak, small thumbs but very long and powerful fingers, forming a hook rather than a hand, adapted for climbing up trees and suspending the whole weight from horizontal branches. The almost complete identity of the skeleton, however, and the close similarity of the muscles and of all the internal organs, have produced that striking and ludicrous resemblance to man which every one recognizes in these higher apes and, in a less degree, in the whole monkey tribe; the face and features, the motions, attitudes, and gestures being often a strange caricature of humanity. Let us, then, examine a little more closely in what the resemblance consists, and how far, and to what extent, these animals really differ from us.

Besides the face, which is often wonderfully human—although the absence of any protuberant nose gives it often a curiously infantile aspect, monkeys, and especially apes, resemble us most closely in the hand and arm. The hand has well-formed fingers with nails, and the skin of the palm is lined and furrowed like our own. The thumb is, however, smaller and weaker than ours, and is not so much

used in taking hold of anything. The monkey's hand is, therefore, not so well adapted as that of man for a variety of purposes, and cannot be applied with such precision in holding small objects, while it is unsuitable for performing delicate operations such as tying a knot or writing with a pen. A monkey does not take hold of a nut with its forefinger and thumb as we do, but grasps it between the fingers and the palm in a clumsy way, just as a baby does before it has acquired the proper use of its hand. Two groups of monkeys—one in Africa and one in South America—have no thumbs on their hands, and yet they do not seem to be in any respect inferior to other kinds which possess it. In most of the American monkeys the thumb bends in the same direction as the fingers, and in none is it so perfectly opposed to the fingers as our thumbs are; and all these circumstances show that the hand of the monkey is, both structurally and functionally, a very different and very inferior organ to that of man, since it is not applied to similar purposes, nor is it capable of being so applied.

When we look at the feet of monkeys we find a still greater difference, for these have much larger and more opposable thumbs and are therefore more like our hands; and this is the case with all monkeys, so that even those which have no thumbs on their hands, or have them small and weak and parallel to the fingers, have always large and well-formed thumbs on their feet. It was on account of this peculiarity that the great French naturalist Cuvier named the whole group of monkeys *Quadrumana*, or four-handed animals, because, besides the two hands on their fore limbs, they have also two hands in place of feet on their hind limbs. Modern naturalists have given up the use of this term, because they say that the hind extremities of all monkeys are really feet, only these feet are shaped like hands; but this is a point of anatomy, or rather of nomenclature, which we need not here discuss.

Let us, however, before going further, inquire into the purpose and use of this peculiarity, and we shall then see that it is simply an adaptation to the mode of life of

the animals which possess it. Monkeys, as a rule, live in trees, and are especially abundant in the great tropical forests. They feed chiefly upon fruits, and occasionally eat insects and birds' eggs, as well as young birds, all of which they find in the trees; and, as they have no occasion to come down to the ground, they travel from tree to tree by jumping or swinging, and thus pass the greater part of their lives entirely among the leafy branches of lofty trees. For such a mode of existence, they require to be able to move with perfect ease upon large or small branches, and to climb up rapidly from one bough to another. As they use their hands for gathering fruit and catching insects or birds, they require some means of holding on with their feet, otherwise they would be liable to continual falls, and they are able to do this by means of their long, finger-like toes and large, opposable thumbs, which grasp a branch almost as securely as a bird grasps its perch. The true hands, on the contrary, are used chiefly to climb with, and to swing the whole weight of the body from one branch or one tree to another, and for this purpose the fingers are very long and strong, and in many species they are further strengthened by being partially joined together, as if the skin of our fingers grew together as far as the knuckles. This shows that the separate action of the fingers, which is so important to us, is little required by monkeys, whose hand is really an organ for climbing and seizing food, while their foot is required to support them firmly in any position on the branches of trees, and for this purpose it has become modified into a large and powerful grasping hand.

Another striking difference between monkeys and men is that the former never walk with ease in an erect posture, but always use their arms in climbing or in walking on all-fours like most quadrupeds. The monkeys that we see in the streets dressed up and walking erect, only do so after much drilling and teaching, just as dogs may be taught to walk in the same way; and the posture is almost as unnatural to the one animal as it is to the other. The largest and most man-like of the apes — the gorilla, chimpanzee, and orang-utan

— also walk usually on all-fours; but in these the arms are so long and the legs so short that the body appears half erect when walking; and they have the habit of resting on the knuckles of the hands, not on the palms like the smaller monkeys, whose arms and legs are more nearly of an equal length, which tends still further to give them a semi-erect position. Still, they are never known to walk of their own accord on their hind legs only, though they can do so for short distances, and the story of their using a stick and walking erect by its help in the wild state is not true. Monkeys, then, are both four-handed and four-footed beasts; they possess four hands formed very much like our hands, and capable of picking up or holding any small object in the same manner; but they are also four-footed, because they use all four limbs for the purpose of walking, running, or climbing; and, being adapted to this double purpose, the hands want the delicacy of touch and the freedom as well as the precision of movement which ours possess. Man alone is so constructed that he walks erect with perfect ease, and has his hands free for any use to which he wishes to apply them; and this is the great and essential bodily distinction between monkeys and men.

We will now give some account of the different kinds of monkeys and the countries they inhabit.

THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF MONKEYS AND THE COUNTRIES THEY INHABIT.

MONKEYS are usually divided into three kinds — apes, monkeys, and baboons; but these do not include the American monkeys, which are really more different from all those of the Old World than any of the latter are from each other. Naturalists, therefore, divide the whole monkey tribe into two great families, inhabiting the Old and the New Worlds respectively; and, if we learn to remember the kind of differences by which these several groups are distinguished, we shall be able to understand something of the classification of animals, and the difference between important and unimportant characters.

Taking first the Old World groups, they

may be thus defined: apes have no tails; monkeys have tails, which are usually long; while baboons have short tails, and their faces, instead of being round and with a man-like expression as in apes and monkeys, are long and more dog-like. These differences are, however, by no means constant, and it is often difficult to tell whether an animal should be classed as an ape, a monkey, or a baboon. The Gibraltar ape, for example, though it has no tail, is really a monkey, because it has callosities, or hard pads of bare skin on which it sits, and cheek-pouches in which it can stow away food; the latter character being always absent in the true apes, while both are present in most monkeys and baboons. All these animals, however, from the largest ape to the smallest monkey, have the same number of teeth as we have, and they are arranged in a similar manner, although the tusks, or canine teeth, of the males are often large, like those of a dog.

The American monkeys, on the other hand, with the exception of the marmosets, have four additional grinding teeth (one in each jaw on either side), and none of them have callosities, or cheek-pouches. They never have prominent snouts like the baboons; their nostrils are placed wide apart and open sideways on the face; the tail, though sometimes short, is never quite absent; and the thumb bends the same way as the fingers, is generally very short and weak, and is often quite wanting. We thus see that these American monkeys differ in a great number of characters from those of the eastern hemisphere; and they have this further peculiarity, that many of them have prehensile or grasping tails, which are never found in the monkeys of any other country. This curious organ serves the purpose of a fifth hand. It has so much muscular power that the animal can hang by it easily with the tip curled round a branch, while it can also be used to pick up small objects with almost as much ease and exactness as an elephant's trunk. In those species which have it most perfectly formed it is very long and powerful, and the end has the under side covered with bare skin, exactly resembling that of the

finger or palm of the hand and apparently equally sensitive. One of the common kinds of monkeys that accompany street organ-players has a prehensile tail, but not of the most perfect kind; since in this species the tail is entirely clad with hair to the tip, and seems to be used chiefly to steady the animal when sitting on a branch by being twisted round another branch near it. The statement is often erroneously made that all American monkeys have prehensile tails; but the fact is that rather less than half the known kinds have them so, the remainder having this organ either short and bushy or long and slender, but entirely without any power of grasping. All prehensile-tailed monkeys are American, but all American monkeys are not prehensile-tailed.

By remembering these characters it is easy, with a little observation, to tell whether any strange monkey comes from America or from the Old World. If it has bare seat-pads, or if when eating it fills its mouth till its cheeks swell out like little bags, we may be sure it comes from some part of Africa or Asia; while if it can curl up the end of its tail so as to take hold of anything, it is certainly American. As all the tailed monkeys of the Old World have seat-pads (or ischial callosities as they are called in scientific language), and as all the American monkeys have tails, but no seat-pads, this is the most constant external character by which to distinguish them; and having done so we can look for the other peculiarities of the American monkeys, especially the distance apart of the nostrils and their lateral position.

The whole monkey tribe is especially tropical, only a few kinds being found in the warmer parts of the temperate zone. One inhabits the Rock of Gibraltar, and there is one very like it in Japan, and these are the two monkeys which live farthest from the equator. In the tropics they become very abundant and increase in numbers and variety as we approach the equator, where the climate is hot, moist, and equable, and where flowers, fruits, and insects are to be found throughout the year. Africa has about fifty-five different kinds, Asia and its islands about

sixty, while America has one hundred and fourteen, or almost exactly the same as Asia and Africa together. Australia and its islands have no monkeys, nor has the great and luxuriant island of New Guinea, whose magnificent forests seem so well adapted for them. We will now give a short account of the different kinds of monkeys inhabiting each of the tropical continents.

Africa possesses two of the great man-like apes, the gorilla and the chimpanzee, the former being the largest ape known, and the one which, on the whole, perhaps most resembles man, though its countenance is less human than that of the chimpanzee. Both are found in west Africa, near the equator, but they also inhabit the interior wherever there are great forests; and Dr. Schweinfurth states that the chimpanzee inhabits the country about the sources of the Shari River, in 28° E. long. and 4° N. lat.

The long-tailed monkeys of Africa are very numerous and varied. One group has no cheek-pouches and no thumb on the hand, and many of these have long, soft fur of varied colors. The most numerous group are the guenons, rather small, long-tailed monkeys, very active and lively, and often having their faces curiously marked with white or black, or ornamented with whiskers or other tufts of hair; and they all have large cheek-pouches and good-sized thumbs. Many of them are called green monkeys, from the greenish-yellow tint of their fur, and most of them are well-formed, pleasing animals. They are found only in tropical Africa.

The baboons are larger, but less numerous. They resemble dogs in the general form and the length of the face or snout, but they have hands with well-developed thumbs on both the fore and hind limbs; and this, with something in the expression of the face and their habit of sitting up and using their hands in a very human fashion, at once shows that they belong to the monkey tribe. Many of them are very ugly, and in their wild state they are the fiercest and most dangerous of monkeys. Some have the tail very long, others of medium length, while it is sometimes reduced to a mere stump, and all have large cheek-pouches and bare seat-pads. They are found all over Africa from Egypt to the Cape of Good Hope; while one species, called the hamadryas, extends from Abyssinia across the Red Sea into Arabia, and is the only baboon found out of Africa. This spe-

cies was known to the ancients, and it is often represented in Egyptian sculptures, while mummies of it have been found in the catacombs. The largest and most remarkable of all the baboons is the mandrill of west Africa, whose swollen and hog-like face is ornamented with stripes of vivid blue and scarlet. This animal has a tail scarcely two inches long, while in size and strength it is not much inferior to the gorilla. These large baboons go in bands, and are said to be a match for any other animals in the African forests, and even to attack and drive away the elephants from the districts they inhabit.

Turning now to Asia, we have first one of the best known of the large man-like apes — the orang-utan, found only in the two large islands, Borneo and Sumatra. The name is Malay, signifying "man of the woods," and it should be pronounced *orang-utan*, the accent being on the first syllable of both words. It is a very curious circumstance that, whereas the gorilla and chimpanzee are both black, like the negroes of the same country, the orang-utan is red or reddish-brown, closely resembling the color of the Malays and Dyaks who live in the Bornean forests. Though very large and powerful, it is a harmless creature, feeding on fruit, and never attacking any other animal except in self-defence. A full-grown male orang-utan is rather more than four feet high, but with a body as large as that of a stout man, and with enormously long and powerful arms.

Another group of true apes inhabit Asia and the larger Asiatic islands, and are in some respects the most remarkable of the whole family. These are the gibbons, or long-armed apes, which are generally of small size and of a gentle disposition, but possessing the most wonderful agility. In these creatures the arms are as long as the body and legs together, and are so powerful that a gibbon will hang for hours suspended from a branch, or swing to and fro, and then throw itself a great distance through the air. The arms, in fact, completely take the place of the legs for travelling. Instead of jumping from bough to bough and running on the branches, like other apes and monkeys, the gibbons move along while hanging suspended in the air, stretching their arms from bough to bough, and thus going hand over hand as a very active sailor will climb along a rope. The strength of their arms is, however, so prodigious, and their hold so sure, that they often loose one hand before they have caught a bough

with the other, thus seeming almost to fly through the air by a series of swinging leaps; and they travel among the network of interlacing boughs a hundred feet above the earth with as much ease and certainty as we walk or run upon level ground, and with even greater speed.

These little animals scarcely ever come down to the ground of their own accord; but when obliged to do so they run along almost erect, with their long arms swinging round and round, as if trying to find some tree or other object to climb upon. They are the only apes who naturally walk without using their hands as well as their feet; but this does not make them more like men, for it is evident that the attitude is not an easy one, and is only adopted because the arms are habitually used to swing by, and are therefore naturally held upwards instead of downwards, as they must be when walking on them.

The tailed monkeys of Asia consist of two groups, the first of which have no cheek-pouches, but always have very long tails. They are true forest monkeys, very active, and of a shy disposition. The most remarkable of these is the long-nosed monkey of Borneo, which is very large, of a pale brown color, and distinguished by possessing a long, pointed, fleshy nose, totally unlike that of all other monkeys. Another interesting species is the black and white entellus monkey of India, called *hanuman* by the Hindoos, and considered sacred by them. These animals are petted and fed, and at some of the temples numbers of them come every day for the food which the priests, as well as the people, provide for them.

The next group of Eastern monkeys are the macaques, which are more like baboons, and often run upon the ground. They are more bold and vicious than the others. All have cheek-pouches, and though some have long tails, in others the tail is short, or reduced to a mere stump. In some few this stump is so very short that there appears to be no tail, as in the magot of north Africa and Gibraltar, and in an allied species that inhabits Japan.

AMERICAN MONKEYS.

THE monkeys which inhabit America form three very distinct groups: 1st — the sapajous, which have prehensile or grasping tails; 2nd — the sagouins, which have ordinary tails, either long or short; and, 3rd — the marmosets, very small creatures, with sharp claws, long tails, which are not prehensile, and a smaller

number of teeth than all other American monkeys. Each of these three groups contain several sub-groups, or *genera*, which often differ remarkably from each other, and from all the monkeys of the Old World.

We will begin with the howling monkeys, which are the largest found in America, and are celebrated for the loud voice of the males. Often in the great forests of the Amazon or Oronooko a tremendous noise is heard in the night or early morning, as if a great assemblage of wild beasts were all roaring and screaming together. The noise may be heard for miles, and it is louder and more piercing than that of any other animals, yet it is all produced by a single male howler sitting on the branches of some lofty tree. They are enabled to make this extraordinary noise by means of an organ that is possessed by no other animal. The lower jaw is unusually deep, and this makes room for a hollow bony vessel about the size of a large walnut, situated under the root of the tongue, and having an opening into the windpipe by which the animal can force air into it. This increases the power of its voice, acting something like the hollow case of a violin, and producing those marvellous rolling and reverberating sounds which caused the celebrated traveller Waterton to declare that they were such as might have had their origin in the infernal regions. The howlers are large and stout-bodied monkeys with bearded faces, and very strong and powerfully grasping tails. They inhabit the wildest forests; they are very shy, and are seldom taken captive, though they are less active than many other American monkeys.

Next come the spider monkeys, so called from their slender bodies and enormously long limbs and tail. In these monkeys, the tail is so long, strong, and perfect, that it completely takes the place of a fifth hand. By twisting the end of it round a branch the animal can swing freely in the air with complete safety; and this gives them a wonderful power of climbing and passing from tree to tree, because the distance they can stretch is that of the tail, body, and arm added together, and these are all unusually long. They can also swing themselves through the air for great distances, and are thus able to pass rapidly from tree to tree without ever descending to the ground, just like the gibbons in the Malayan forests. Although capable of feats of wonderful agility, the spider monkeys are

usually slow and deliberate in their motions, and have a timid, melancholy expression, very different from that of most monkeys. Their hands are very long, but have only four fingers, being adapted for hanging on to branches rather than for getting hold of small objects. It is said that when they have to cross a river the trees on the opposite banks of which do not approach near enough for a leap, several of them form a chain, one hanging by its tail from a lofty overhanging branch and seizing hold of the tail of the one below it, then gradually swinging themselves backwards and forwards till the lower one is able to seize hold of a branch on the opposite side. He then climbs up the tree, and, when sufficiently high, the first one lets go, and the swing either carries him across to a bough on the opposite side or he climbs up over his companions.

Closely allied to the last are the woolly monkeys, which have an equally well-developed prehensile tail, but better proportioned limbs, and a thick woolly fur of a uniform grey or brownish color. They have well-formed fingers and thumbs, both on the hands and feet, and are rather deliberate in their motions, and exceedingly tame and affectionate in captivity. They are great eaters, and are usually very fat. They are found only in the far interior of the Amazon valley, and, having a delicate constitution, seldom live long in Europe. These monkeys are not so fond of swinging themselves about by their tails as are the spider monkeys, and offer more opportunities of observing how completely this organ takes the place of a fifth hand. When walking about a house or on the deck of a ship the partially curled tail is carried in a horizontal position on the ground, and the moment it touches anything it twists round it and brings it forward, when, if eatable, it is at once appropriated; and when fastened up the animal will obtain any food that may be out of reach of its hands with the greatest facility, picking up small bits of biscuit, nuts, etc., much as an elephant does with the tip of his trunk.

We now come to a group of monkeys whose prehensile tail is of a less perfect character, since it is covered with hair to the tip, and is of no use to pick up objects. It can, however, curl round a branch, and serves to steady the animal while sitting or feeding, but is never used to hang and swing by in the manner so common with the spider monkeys and their allies. These are rather small-sized animals, with round heads and with moderately long

tails. They are very active and intelligent, their limbs are not so long as in the preceding group, and though they have five fingers on each hand and foot, the hands have weak and hardly opposable thumbs. Some species of these monkeys are often carried about by itinerant organ-men, and are taught to walk erect and perform many amusing tricks. They form the genus *Cebus* of naturalists.

The remainder of the American monkeys have non-prehensile tails, like those of the monkeys of the eastern hemisphere; but they consist of several distinct groups, and differ very much in appearance and habits. First we have the sakis, which have a bushy tail and usually very long and thick hair, something like that of a bear. Sometimes the tail is very short, appearing like rounded tuft of hair; many of the species have fine, bushy whiskers, which meet under the chin, and appear as if they had been dressed and trimmed by a barber, and the head is often covered with thick, curly hair, looking like a wig. Others, again, have the face quite red, and one has the head nearly bald, a most remarkable peculiarity among monkeys. This latter species was met with by Mr. Bates on the upper Amazon, and he describes the face as being of a vivid scarlet, the body clothed from neck to tail with very long, straight, and shining white hair, while the head was nearly bald, owing to the very short crop of thin, grey hairs. As a finish to their striking physiognomy these monkeys have bushy whiskers of a sandy color meeting under the chin, and yellowish grey eyes. The color of the face is so vivid that it looks as if covered with a thick coat of bright scarlet paint. These creatures are very delicate, and have never reached Europe alive, though several of the allied forms have lived some time in our Zoological Gardens.

An allied group consists of the elegant squirrel monkeys, with long, straight, hairy tails, and often adorned with prettily variegated colors. They are usually small animals; some have the face marked with black and white, others have curious whiskers, and their nails are rather sharp and claw-like. They have large, round heads, and their fur is more glossy and smooth than in most other American monkeys, so that they more resemble some of the smaller monkeys of Africa. These little creatures are very active, running about the trees like squirrels, and feeding largely on insects as well as on fruit.

Closely allied to these are the small group of night monkeys, which have large eyes, and a round face surrounded by a kind of ruff of whitish fur, so as to give it an owl-like appearance, whence they are sometimes called owl-faced monkeys. They are covered with soft grey fur, like that of a rabbit, and sleep all day long concealed in hollow trees. The face is also marked with white patches and stripes, giving it a rather carnivorous or cat-like aspect, which, perhaps, serves as a protection, by causing the defenceless creature to be taken for an arboreal tiger-cat or some such beast of prey.

This finishes the series of such of the American monkeys as have a larger number of teeth than those of the Old World. But there is another group, the marmosets, which have the same number of teeth as Eastern monkeys, but differently distributed in the jaws, a pre-molar being substituted for a molar tooth. In other particulars they resemble the rest of the American monkeys. These are very small and delicate creatures, some having the body only seven inches long. The thumb of the hand is not opposable, and instead of nails they have sharp compressed claws. These diminutive monkeys have long, non-prehensile tails, and they have a silky fur often of varied and beautiful colors. Some are striped with grey and white, or are of rich brown or golden brown tints, varied by having the head or shoulders white or black, while in many there are crests, frills, manes, or long ear-tufts, adding greatly to their variety and beauty. These little animals are timid and restless; their motions are more like those of a squirrel than a monkey. Their sharp claws enable them to run quickly along the branches, but they seldom leap from bough to bough like the larger monkeys. They live on fruits and insects, but are much afraid of wasps, which they are said to recognize even in a picture. This completes our sketch of the American monkeys, and we see that, although they possess no such remarkable forms as the gorilla or the baboons, yet they exhibit a wonderful diversity of external characters, considering that all seem equally adapted to a purely arboreal life. In the howlers we have a specially developed voice-organ, which is altogether peculiar; in the spider monkeys we find the adaptation to active motion among the topmost branches of the forest trees carried to an extreme point of development; while the singular nocturnal monkeys, the active squirrel monkeys, and

the exquisite little marmosets, show how distinct are the forms under which the same general type may be exhibited, and in how many varied ways existence may be sustained under almost identical conditions.

LEMURS.

In the general term, monkeys, considered as equivalent to the order primates, or the *Quadrumana* of naturalists, we have to include another sub-type, that of the lemurs. These animals are of a lower grade than the true monkeys, from which they differ in so many points of structure that they are considered to form a distinct sub-order, or, by some naturalists, even a separate order. They have usually a much larger head and more pointed muzzle than monkeys; they vary considerably in the number, form, and arrangement of the teeth; their thumbs are always well developed, but their fingers vary much in size and length; their tails are usually long, but several species have no tail whatever, and they are clothed with a more or less woolly fur, often prettily variegated with white and black. They inhabit the deep forests of Africa, Madagascar, and southern Asia, and are more sluggish in their movements than true monkeys, most of them being of nocturnal or crepuscular habits. They feed largely on insects, eating also fruits and the eggs or young of birds.

The most curious species are—the slow lemurs of south India, small, tailless, nocturnal animals, somewhat resembling sloths in appearance, and almost as deliberate in their movements, except when in the act of seizing their insect prey; the tarsier, or spectre lemur, of the Malay islands, a small, long-tailed, nocturnal lemur, remarkable for the curious development of the hind feet, which have two of the toes very short and with sharp claws, while the others have nails, the third toe being exceedingly long and slender, though the thumb is very large, giving the feet a very irregular and *outré* appearance; and, lastly, the aye-aye of Madagascar, the most remarkable of all. This animal has very large ears and a squirrel-like tail, with long, spreading hair. It has large, curved, incisor teeth, which add to its squirrel-like appearance and caused the early naturalists to class it among the rodents. But its most remarkable character is found in its fore feet or hands, the fingers of which are all very long and armed with sharp, curved claws, but one of them, the second, is

wonderfully slender, being not half the thickness of the others. This curious combination of characters shows that the aye-aye is a very specialized form—that is, one whose organization has been slowly modified to fit it for a peculiar mode of life. From information received from its native country, and from a profound study of its organization, Professor Owen believes that it is adapted for the one purpose of feeding on small, wood-boring insects. Its large feet and sharp claws enable it to cling firmly to the branches of trees in almost any position; by means of its large, delicate ears it listens for the sound of the insect gnawing within the branch, and is thus able to fix its exact position; with its powerful, curved, gnawing teeth it rapidly cuts away the bark and wood till it exposes the burrow of the insect, most probably the soft larva of some beetle, and then comes into play the extraordinary long, wire-like finger, which enters the small, cylindrical burrow, and with the sharp, bent claw hooks out the grub. Here we have a most complex adaptation of different parts and organs all converging to one special end, that end being the same as is reached by a group of birds, the woodpeckers, in a different way; and it is a most interesting fact that, although woodpeckers abound in all the great continents, and are especially common in the tropical forests of Asia, Africa, and America, they are quite absent from Madagascar. We may therefore consider that the aye-aye really occupies the same place in nature in the forests of this tropical island, as do the woodpeckers in other parts of the world.

DISTRIBUTION, AFFINITIES, AND ZOOLOGICAL RANK OF MONKEYS.

HAVING thus sketched an outline of the monkey tribe as regards their more prominent external characters and habits, we must say a few words on their general relations as a distinct order of mammalia. No other group so extensive and so varied as this, is so exclusively tropical in its distribution, a circumstance no doubt due to the fact that monkeys depend so largely on fruit and insects for their subsistence. A very few species extend into the warmer parts of the temperate zones, their extreme limits in the northern hemisphere being Gibraltar, the western Himalayas at eleven thousand feet elevation, east Thibet, and Japan. In America they are found in Mexico, but do not appear to pass beyond the tropic. In the southern hemisphere they

are limited by the extent of the forests in south Brazil, which reach about 30° south latitude. In the East, owing to their entire absence from Australia, they do not reach the tropic; but in Africa some baboons range to the southern extremity of the continent.

But this extreme restriction of the order to almost tropical lands is only recent. Directly we go back to the pliocene period of geology, we find the remains of monkeys in France, and even in England. In the earlier miocene several kinds, some of large size, lived in France, Germany, and Greece, all more or less closely allied to living forms of Asia and Africa. About the same period monkeys of the South American type inhabited the United States. In the remote eocene period the same temperate lands were inhabited by lemurs in the east, and by curious animals believed to be intermediate between lemurs and marmosets in the west. We know from a variety of other evidence that throughout these vast periods a mild and almost sub-tropical climate extended over all central Europe and parts of North America, while one of a temperate character prevailed as far north as the Arctic circle. The monkey tribe then enjoyed a far greater range over the earth, and perhaps filled a more important place in nature than it does now. Its restriction to the comparatively narrow limits of the tropics is no doubt mainly due to the great alteration of climate which occurred at the close of the tertiary period, but it may have been aided by the continuous development of varied forms of mammalian life better fitted for the contrasted seasons and deciduous vegetation of the north temperate regions. The more extensive area formerly inhabited by the monkey tribe, would have favored their development into a number of divergent forms, in distant regions and adapted to distinct modes of life. As these retreated southward and became concentrated in a more limited area, such as were able to maintain themselves became mingled together as we now find them, the ancient and lowly marmosets and lemurs subsisting side by side with the more recent and more highly developed howlers and anthropoid apes.

Throughout the long ages of the tertiary period monkeys must have been very abundant and very varied, yet it is but rarely that their fossil remains are found. This, however, is not difficult to explain. The deposits in which mammalian remains most abound are those

formed in lakes or in caverns. In the former the bodies of large numbers of terrestrial animals were annually deposited, owing to their having been caught by floods in the tributary streams, swallowed up in marginal bogs or quicksands, or drowned by the giving way of ice. Caverns were the haunts of hyænas, tigers, bears, and other beasts of prey, which dragged into them the bodies of their victims, and left many of their bones to become imbedded in stalagmite or in the muddy deposit left by floods, while herbivorous animals were often carried into them by these floods, or by falling down the swallow-holes which often open into caverns from above. But, owing to their arboreal habits, monkeys were to a great extent freed from all these dangers. Whether devoured by beasts or birds of prey, or dying a natural death, their bones would usually be left on dry land where they would slowly decay under atmospheric influences. Only under very exceptional circumstances would they become imbedded in aqueous deposits; and instead of being surprised at their rarity we should rather wonder that so many have been discovered in a fossil state.

Monkeys, as a whole, form a very isolated group, having no near relations to any other mammalia. This is undoubtedly an indication of great antiquity. The peculiar type which has since reached so high a development must have branched off the great mammalian stock at a very remote epoch, certainly far back in the secondary period, since in the eocene we find lemurs and lemurine monkeys already specialized. At this remoter period they were probably not separable from the insectivora, or (perhaps) from the ancestral marsupials. Even now we have one living form, the curious *Galeopithecus* or flying lemur, which has only recently been separated from the lemurs, with which it was formerly united, to be classed as one of the insectivora; and it is only among the opossums and some other marsupials that we again find hand-like feet with opposable thumbs, which are such a curious and constant feature of the monkey tribe.

This relationship to the lowest of the mammalian tribes seems inconsistent with the place usually accorded to these animals at the head of the entire mammalian series, and opens up the question whether this is a real superiority or whether it depends merely on the obvious relationship to ourselves. If we could suppose a being gifted with high intelligence, but

with a form totally unlike that of man, to have visited the earth before man existed in order to study the various forms of animal life that were found there, we can hardly think he would have placed the monkey tribe so high as we do. He would observe that their whole organization was specially adapted to an arboreal life, and this specialization would be rather against their claiming the first rank among terrestrial creatures. Neither in size, nor strength, nor beauty, would they compare with many other forms, while in intelligence they would not surpass, even if they equalled, the horse or the beaver. The carnivora, as a whole, would certainly be held to surpass them in the exquisite perfection of their physical structure, while the flexible trunk of the elephant, combined with his vast strength and admirable sagacity, would probably gain for him the first rank in the animal creation.

But if this would have been a true estimate, the mere fact that the ape is our nearest relation does not necessarily oblige us to come to any other conclusion. Man is undoubtedly the most perfect of all animals, but he is so solely in respect of characters in which he differs from all the monkey tribe — the easily erect posture, the perfect freedom of the hands from all part in locomotion, the large size and complete opposability of the thumb, and the well-developed brain, which enables him fully to utilize these combined physical advantages. The monkeys have none of these; and without them the amount of resemblance they have to us is no advantage, and confers no rank. We are biassed by the too exclusive consideration of the man-like apes. If these did not exist the remaining monkeys could not be thereby deteriorated as to their organization or lowered in their zoological position, but it is doubtful if we should then class them so high as we now do. We might then dwell more on their resemblances to lower types — to rodents, to insectivora, and to marsupials, and should hardly rank the hideous baboon above the graceful leopard or stately stag. The true conclusion appears to be, that the combination of external characters and internal structure which exists in the monkeys, is that which, when greatly improved, refined, and beautified, was best calculated to become the perfect instrument of the human intellect and to aid in the development of man's higher nature; while, on the other hand, in the rude, inharmonious, and undevel-

oped state which it has reached in the quadrumana, it is by no means worthy of the highest place, or can be held to exhibit the most perfect development of existing animal life.

ALFRED R. WALLACE.

From Temple Bar.
THE FRERES.

BY MRS. ALEXANDER, AUTHOR OF "THE
WOOLING O'T."

CHAPTER XLII.

LADY ELTON's departure was a sort of triumphal procession. All the Dalbersdorf party were there: the count, with a huge bouquet; Dr. Niedner; and the landlord of the Hof, armed with a basket of substantial sandwiches, which Luigi had taught him to make, brought up the rear.

Lady Elton, though genial and gracious, was somewhat annoyed at this public demonstration.

"I wanted my last words with you, dear," she said, laying her hand on Grace's arm — and Grace thought it rather tremulous. "I wish very much you were coming with me. I wish your mother could have spared you."

Here Balfour came up, and Lady Elton, letting Grace go, spoke to him aside for a few minutes; then others pressed round, and Grace had no further opportunity of speaking in private to her friend. Finally, when Lady Elton was settled in the carriage, and her books, wraps, cushions, bouquets, etc., were properly stowed away, she said, "Let Grace come to me;" and Grace, standing on the step of the carriage, gave her both her hands. Lady Elton, looking at her with a long, yearning expression, drew her down and kissed her fondly. "God bless you, child! think of me sometimes."

"Indeed — indeed I will; and will you write from Paris?"

"Yes; good-bye — do not forget."

The guard's whistle sounded. The count laid a warning touch on his grand-niece's arm, and the train moved on, Lady Elton looking through the window to the last, and Grace at her. Then every one turned and walked away, talking audibly of the charm, the excellence, the intelligence, the high-breeding of their late visitor, for five minutes at least; after which the current local topics of interest superseded the last bit of novelty. Grace

only was quite silent; and as she walked back towards home, with her grand-uncle, Dr. Niedner, and Balfour, the latter noticed how pale she looked, and that there was a suspicious sparkle on her long lashes. He made no remark, however; and at length Grace broke out with, —

"I suppose it is stupid and unreasonable of me, but I cannot help it. I feel inclined to have a good cry — as if she had gone away forever. I cannot tell you how I shall miss her: she seems to have taken half the home feeling of Zittau away with her, yet she has been barely two months here."

"It is not like you to be so fanciful," said Balfour, with a tender smile, and drawing nearer as he spoke. "Lady Elton is a remarkably free agent, and I dare say will come to you, or bring you to her, before long. Distance scarcely exists for people of fortune in these days."

"I know all that," said Grace, "and I shall probably feel differently to-morrow. But I do love Lady Elton, and she is not happy; then I seem in some way necessary to her, and that is the sting. It breaks my heart to part with those that miss me. I was so sorry to leave Jimmy Byrne, for instance."

"Ah, Grace, then" — began Balfour quickly, and paused before he went on — "the fact is, you think yourself so all-essential that you shrink from withdrawing the light of your countenance from your adorers."

"What a rude, unkind speech!" returned Grace, smiling. "I do not know why you think me conceited; you are always launching arrows of scorn at my weakness. You may say what you like, there *are* a few in this world, just two or three, to whom I am very essential."

"I don't think you conceited — that is too small a word; but you believe in yourself — that is a tower of strength to you. Perhaps, if you knew all, I think—" He stopped abruptly.

"I should have less faith in myself? No, Maurice; I think I know what I am worth. I have more humility than you believe."

"I don't know that my opinion would do much to deepen it," said he, drawn on irresistibly to utter more of his feelings than usual, but still preserving a playful tone, "considering that you are 'my queen.'"

"Ah, that is nonsense!" replied Grace, turning to him with her frank, sweet smile; "I am your friend — your comrade!"

"Ay," cried Balfour, with a fervor he could not repress, "the best, the brightest comrade ever man had!"

"That is right, Maurice," said Grace exultingly. "I know now that we are quite friends again, in spite of Falkenberg's nonsense."

"Don't name him," said Balfour hastily.

This exclamation brought them to the door of Mrs. Frere's dwelling, and the doctor taking his leave, the other two gentlemen ascended *au premier* with Grace.

Mrs. Frere had not followed the multitude to the railway station, but sat serene and picturesque in her black silk and soft white lace, ready to receive the news and condolences of her visitors.

"We had quite a little crowd of leavetakers," said Balfour, after they had exchanged greetings and the count had accepted an offer of *Schnaps*.

"I am glad I made my adieux quietly at the hotel," returned Mrs. Frere. "Poor Lady Elton! she seemed exceedingly low. I cannot think why she went away if she would rather stay."

"It is not easy to read the riddle of a fine lady's mind," said the count, with an air of supreme experience. "It's not often they could tell you the reason why themselves; but somehow, though they can't explain, they are generally right."

"That is what they say in Ireland of the *omadhaun*, or village fool. You know the sort of creature, lieber uncle," returned Grace, laughing; "the country-people say, 'Ach, God help him! he knows a dale more than us, only he can't tell.' It is not a flattering likeness!"

"You are too sharp for your old uncle, my darling," said the count. "Faith, the ladies are no fools—at least those I have known."

"We shall miss dear Lady Elton terribly," said Mrs. Frere; "however, I am glad to say that I expect a visit from another connection, or rather relation—a very charming person."

"Who, mother?" cried Grace, with sudden eagerness, a look almost of alarm in her wide-opened eyes.

"Your cousin Max. I had a letter from him just now. He wants to know what we are going to do this summer; because he will have his holiday early in June, and would like to pay us a visit *en route* perhaps to Vienna. I shall be quite pleased to see him. He is really a good specimen of a young Englishman."

"Max coming here?" said Grace. "It's quite astonishing!"

Balfour looked watchfully at her from under his half-closed lids.

"I must say it is quite natural that he should come and see us, Grace. I do not think you ever appreciated Max."

"Perhaps not," said Grace carelessly; and then the subject was changed by the count, who informed the company that his visit to Dresden had been postponed for a couple of days; and he repeated the offer of his horse to Balfour, who very gratefully accepted it.

"And I wish you would take Frieda out with you, Grace," he added; "there is a horse of Ulrich's at Dalbersdorf, and the Verwalter's which you might ride, so you would be a pretty trio."

"It will be quite charming!" cried Grace; "I will write to Frieda, and make a *partie* at once." Here Mab made her appearance, her *Sack* (a leather case for books, *de rigueur* in German schools) on her back; her hair unplaited and streaming down her back, and a considerable space of flounce torn away and hanging in a festoon.

"Oh, Mab! how often have I not asked you to leave your hat and Sack in the corridor!" cried Mrs. Frere in despairing accents; but Mab, totally disregarding her mother, went straight to the count.

"Do you know, Uncle Costello, they would not let me go to the station to bid Lady Elton good-bye; was it not a shame? I only just saw her for two minutes with mamma this morning. She gave me a kiss and told me to be a good girl, and then I was pushed out and sent away to school."

"It *was* a shame, faith," said the veteran, taking her on his knee. "It was more important, a good deal, that you should go to the station than to school—eh, Mab?"

"I think so," said Mab, pouting.

"Mab, you must come with me and be made tidy," said Grace with energy.

"I shall do quite well, sha'n't I, Maurice?" cried Mab, who was very fond of him, forsaking the count and jumping on his knee. "Grace is always teasing me."

"You are a very nice little girl, Mab," returned Maurice, stroking her tumbled hair; "but you would be still nicer if you let Grace put you to rights."

"Ah! you are not so good as Wolff von Falkenberg," cried Mab; "he always took my part, and made Grace let me alone."

"Did he?" said Balfour.

"It will be fine, I think, to-morrow," continued Balfour to Grace, after a pause,

"and the roads in good order. What do you say to a long ride over the border, as far as Gabel, and back by Hain? You will let her come, Mrs. Frere? I don't know that I shall have many more chances of a ride."

"Is it very far, Maurice?"

"Not more than three or four hours," put in Grace. "I have ridden there with Wolff von Falkenberg and the count."

"Oh, very well," said Mrs. Frere placidly; "it will be a great treat to Grace, and she has not much amusement now."

"You had better ride Novara," said Balfour. "I saw a very good horse, a bright bay, at the Hof stables this morning, which will do for me. I will arrange it all this evening. If we start at five, we can be back before dark, Mrs. Frere."

"Very well," returned Mrs. Frere: "and Mab and I will have a droschky, and take a nice drive towards Oybin to meet you," she concluded.

"That will be charming!" cried Grace.

"Delightful!" exclaimed Mab. "Only I should like to have the pony and ride with you; it is ever so much nicer than crawling along in an old droschky!"

"Would you let me go all alone, Mab?" said her mother.

"Oh, you wouldn't mind, mummy dear?"

"No no, Mab; we are going too far for you," observed Grace.

"I am sure I can ride quite as far as you," cried Mab, pouting.

Whereupon, Balfour held out his hand to her; and on her sidling up to him, proceeded to whisper consolation, which at first was evidently rejected with very belligerent head-tossing; but finally her countenance cleared, and she exclaimed in tones of exultation, —

"Maurice says he will take me out to ride one day all by myself, Grace — without you. You are a good Maurice!" And soothed by this enchanting prospect, Mab was induced to go to bed.

The following day fulfilled Balfour's predictions. Brilliant sunshine, air freshened by the previous rain, a blue sky varied by a few slow-sailing snow-white clouds which cast soft shadows on the wide plain, and tender alternations of light on the rocks and woods of the border district — a perfect summer's day, about which, in this northern land, something of the youthfulness of spring still lingered. Nor would it have been easy to find a pair of hearts more full of summer sunshine than those of the well-assorted companions who mounted so gaily for their

evening ride at the appointed hour. To Grace, the highest physical enjoyment was to be on horseback; and it was with more than usual satisfaction she coiled up her "bonny brown hair" into a knot, almost upon her neck, to support her jaunty little felt hat, and fastened her well-fitting habit. The woman who is not elated by the consciousness of looking well is an unnatural monster, of whom we weaker mortals may justly stand in awe. Grace was far from having reached this exalted pitch; and it was in truth a pardonable pleasure which she derived from the reflection presented by her looking-glass; dark-grey, laughing eyes, creamy skin and cheeks softly rosy — a form all pliancy and ease, with a certain richness of outline — a face all frank kindness, with the free, firm glance of one who has nothing to conceal, full of all tender sympathy, yet queen of herself.

"What a delightful evening!" she exclaimed, as she beamed out upon her cavalier issuing from the dark doorway into the sunlight; "and what a delightful idea of yours, dear Maurice!"

He did not reply instantly.

"Let us get off then as soon as possible," he said.

Taking her foot in his hand, he quickly lifted her to the saddle, and sprang on his own horse, which curvetted a little, while he raised his hat to Mrs. Frere, who stood in the balcony.

"When do you start, mother?" asked Grace.

"In about an hour and a half; will that be time enough?"

"Yes; and when you are past Oybin, keep to the right up the hill."

A nod and smile, and they were off.

"I think," said Balfour reflectively, looking at his companion — "I think you ought always to wear a riding-habit, Grace."

"Yes, I think it suits me," she returned; "and I do like it. I feel almost a boy in it!"

"Almost! — but what a vast interval in the 'almost'!"

"Vast indeed, Maurice. What a difference even dress makes! I could accomplish ever so much if I had not all my feminine drapery hanging about my heels; and yet there are so many womanly privileges I could not give up. It is so nice to be taken care of; not that I have ever known, or am likely to know, much of that."

"Nonsense!" returned Maurice, almost roughly. "I imagine you will find

plenty of people willing to take care of you; so you need not don masculine garb for want of a care-taker."

"Well, if ever I do, riding-boots shall certainly form part of it. I like yours immensely; there is something soldier-like and business-like about them. I used always to admire the Lifeguard boots whenever I passed the Horse Guards. Had I been a nurse-maid, I could never have been proof against those boots."

"But not being a nursemaid, I suppose mine have no fascination for you?" said Balfour, smiling, yet watching her from under his drooping eyelids.

"Oh yes; I like you better with them. I was always terribly affected by exteriors, or, let us say, I have an 'artistic eye.'"

"What an active, ambitious fellow you would have made, had you a right to wear broadcloth!" said Balfour, laughing. "I am afraid you are rather an unfeeling, unsentimental young lady."

"Perhaps so; yet no—not unfeeling. At least it is impossible in such matters to measure one's self with others; but if being very uncomfortable often about people and things shows feeling, I have quite enough."

Balfour smiled. "I fancy you have quite as much feeling as is good for you," he said; "and you show what you feel very plainly sometimes, at least to those who know you. I, for instance, who know every shade that passes over your face, every change in your eyes, I know you don't want your pleasant, good-looking cousin to come here. Why, I cannot say. I should fancy him just the fellow to be welcomed by a young lady."

"Yes, he is good-looking," returned Grace thoughtfully—she had been a little startled by Balfour's words, but the impression passed away almost immediately—"and he can be very nice too; nay, more, he has been very good and helpful to Randal. Still you are right; I do not want him to come."

"Am I too bold to ask why?"

"No, I can tell you nearly anything, Maurice; but this I scarcely can explain. I am afraid I have a shabby reason for not wishing to see Max. We are under obligations to him that we cannot yet repay."

"Ah!"—a long-drawn "Ah!" "Then he wants payment in some coin that you cannot or will not produce?"

Grace was silent; but a quick, tell-tale blush flamed up over cheek and brow, and even down the fair white throat, to hide itself under the collar of her habit.

Balfour looked at her, a sudden glance full of pain, and immediately averted.

"You mean that he wants to marry me?" said Grace, at last breaking the silence which oppressed her, and forcing hers to speak with a bluntness scarcely natural. "I believe Max would think such an alliance a mistake and a misfortune. He is ambitious, and I am nobody; he is worldly, and despises my homeliness; he is"—a pause—"he is far from a bad fellow. I must not be ungrateful; he has helped Randal most efficiently. And oh! I pray that soon, very soon, I may be able to pay him all. Now, Maurice, here is a lovely bit of soft, sandy road. Novara against the 'brown,' for a pair of gloves!" And gathering up the reins, she struck her horse smartly and broke into a gallop.

Balfour, taken by surprise, was left behind for a few minutes, but soon came up with her; and for some time they went neck and neck, with scarce the interchange of a word, both thrilled by the exhilaration of the swinging pace, the curious sense of power, of a doubled being, which comes to the practised rider when well mounted, and feeling the free stride of a willing steed, to which, in Balfour's case, was added the subtle intoxicating presence of the girl whose charm of beauty, of manner, of nature had penetrated to the depths of his being, and to which he had abandoned himself. As Grace sped on, with beaming eyes and smiling lips, she little dreamed that her companion, with his calm, grave, almost stern face, was thinking that he would rather gallop thus with her into the jaws of death than part with or resign her to another.

But Balfour soon perceived that his horse was swifter, though not better than the count's; and as the road became suddenly steeper a little farther on, he let the "brown" go ahead about half a length.

"Fairly beaten!—eh, my Fräulein?" he said, looking back.

"Yes; so I will knit you a pair of warm gloves for the winter. Won't that be paying my debts nobly?"

"It will—in a better spirit, too, than you show Max Frere. Pray, as you are so strong-minded a young lady, do you intend to disdain matrimony?"

"No, indeed—I do not!" said she frankly; "a good, kind husband, and a home of one's own, is not to be despised; but I could not marry any one for ever so long. How in the world could I leave

my mother and Mab? You see I must have some one who will live near them."

"Ah," returned Balfour, "some rich stay-at-home fellow. I can't fancy anything pleasanter than being able to supply all the needs of the woman you love; it seems natural for a man to give."

"Yes, it does. If I were very rich, I should be quite willing to give all to the man I would marry; but somehow I should not like him to be content to take it."

This talk brought them to the top of a low ridge which intervenes between the rocky, ravine-furrowed district of Oybin and the wide stretch of the Bohemian forest-clad frontier. The ground fell away at their feet in a steeper slope than that which they had just ascended. To the left, hill over hill rose up and up, covered with dense, dark pine woods, cleared here and there in patches, but conveying, as these sombre masses of forest can, a sense of sullen, savage loneliness. To the right, spread a vast open plain far as the eye could reach, dotted in the nearer distance with small villages, their churches and attendant clumps of trees; while all over the remoter portions were scattered fantastic hills of every shape and size, high-reaching peaks, reversed bowl-like hillocks, hills with points, double hills like truncated cones, rounded mounds and broken demi-mounds as though the vast caldron of some gigantic primeval witch, say Mother Earth herself, had been arrested at boiling-point, every bubble and upreaching tongue suddenly and separately solidified, for each stood alone; over all, the tender evening glow, a pale grey-blue, where the horizon dropped down to meet the earth, the opal-tinted white clouds deepening into orange and crimson in the nearer heavens, as the sun, sinking behind the spectators, bestowed a parting benefaction of beauty.

Grace and her companion drew up for a while, in silence gazing upon the strange beauty of the scene.

"Is it not wonderful?" she said at last.

"Most wonderful! I have seen many grander and lovelier scenes, but never anything more curious. There has been volcanic agency at work here."

"Dr. Sturm says there has been a great sea here, and probably the action of the tides and currents produced these strange forms; but really imagination fails to conjure up even an idea of the enormous number of ages that must have passed before all this could have taken shape."

"Ay," returned Balfour; "sometimes

in cutting for a railway or digging for an embankment, one comes on such queer suggestive traces of nature's methods of building, that one's brain is almost dazed by the effort to grasp such conceptions."

"How do you account for it all, Maurice?"

"Me? Oh, I can't account for anything. I am reduced to Topsy's philosophy, and just believe it all 'growed.'"

"Ah, Maurice, that is only the evolution theory masked, and, if so, what is to become of religion?"

"It does not touch religion. You can be just as religious, even though you do believe the evidence of your senses."

"What is your religion, then, Maurice?"

"I am afraid I could not pull through a theological examination; but my own notion is just to clear one's mental deck of the broken spars and tangled cordage of dogma, and try to do one's duty, heartily, unshrinkingly."

"But how vague this is!"

"It is; but I can find nothing clearer. Come, Grace; the sun is sinking fast, and I think there is a little Gasthaus at Gabel where the Verwalter says one can find a tolerable glass of beer."

They plunged down the hill, and were soon wrapped in the thick gloom of a pine wood, across one corner of which the road led. Emerging from it, on a more level piece of the roadway or track, they had a sharp, invigorating trot, till they reached the little hostelry, where, surrounded by most of the juvenile population, who pointed out the "riding lady" with immense interest and amazement, Balfour enjoyed a glass of cold, sparkling beer; and Grace, bending from the saddle, tried to talk to the bright-eyed, dark-haired, ragged, picturesque imps who crowded round, but with small success. Even that short distance over the border had brought them into a region where German was scarcely known.

They were soon again in motion, past a deserted, solemn-looking, grey Schloss, and its adjoining little Gothic chapel — past a small mere, which had gleamed prettily through the trees in their first glimpse of the town — past the *Postamt* and away, their faces towards the sunset, their pleasant, easy talk still flowing frank and free; only Grace did the larger part of the talking. The grey horizon was closing in upon them, and the ridge they had again to surmount was steeper in the direction where they had now to cross it.

"What a charming evening it has been

altogether!" said Grace, after one of the pauses which Balfour did not seem anxious to break. "But we seem to have come farther than I expected. I hope my mother started in good time; she enjoys a drive so much."

"Yes," returned Balfour, a little abstractedly; "this evening will long live in my memory."

"Oh, we must have another ride before you go, Maurice. I do hope you will not go just yet."

No reply; and Grace felt in some vague way conscious that she must not "tease" Maurice. The silence this time lasted till they reached the brow of the hill.

"Let us stop for a moment," cried Grace, turning her horse: "I want to look once more on that strange scene before we go down into the valley. I feel as if I should not see it again."

"And I fancy my horse has picked up a stone," said Balfour, dismounting and proceeding to examine the animal's foot. This done, with the bridle over his arm, he too stood gazing at the panorama spread out beneath; then, turning his back upon it, rested his left arm on the neck of his companion's horse, gazing unrestrained in the bright face which was looking far away over plain and hill. He almost touched her—the perfume of the bunch of violets she wore in her button-hole breathed on him like a caress.

"At any rate I shall probably never see it again," he said; and then involuntarily, in a tone of suppressed pain, he added, "Grace, how can I ever bid you good-bye?"

Struck by his voice, she suddenly looked down into the eyes upraised to hers—eyes passionate indeed, but so full of longing tenderness, of pain, of love, that they fascinated rather than alarmed.

One glance, and lo! the veil was rent: they who had a couple of hours since ridden forth in frank, unembarrassed companionship, could never more be the same to each other. Grace's heart gave one wild bound. Was it all over then, this pleasant friendship? Was she grieved?—was she glad? Had she gained?—had she lost? All these questions swept in a wild whirl through her brain, to be followed by the absorbing idea that Maurice Balfour, her dear, good friend, was suffering pain and sorrow, and must be comforted; but she could not look at him again, though she longed for another glimpse of those grave, sad, loving eyes—why, she did not know.

"Oh, Maurice dear," she said nervously, "you must not be down-hearted; you are so young still. There is so much of our lives before us both, that a few years are nothing. We shall meet again when you are a famous engineer, and I a literary lady; for do you know, I am going to try and write something to be printed, and—had we not better go on? we might miss my mother."

Balfour had covered his face for a moment with his hand, and now raised his head, and speaking with an effort,—

"Yes, let us go on," he said, moving away, and putting his foot in the stirrup.

Grace turned her horse's head and pushed on. Maurice was quickly in the saddle, and beside her. They rode on in silence, not increasing their speed, as the road soon plunged down-hill steeply; and Grace sought in vain for a topic and words to break this terrible significant silence, while some inner voice, apparently quite independent of her proper self, kept repeating, "He is no more a friend or brother; he is more than these!" filling her with a strange compound of dismay and a vague, thrilling, fearful sweetness. Was it possible that she had to think what she ought to say to *Maurice*? It was a terrible change, all in a minute. But how could she interpret that look—that tone—save as the expression of love passing a brother's? "How grave and stern he looked now!" she thought, stealing a glance at his face, which was slightly averted—"severe enough to pass sentence of death on one! Perhaps I am a fool to fancy all this; I must speak to him."

Meanwhile Balfour rode on beside her, fighting a silent but bitter battle with himself; enraged at his own weakness and want of self-control, yet not knowing how much he had betrayed; too occupied by his effort at self-mastery to remark his companion's unusual quietude. He hoped and believed that Grace had not read his thoughts—that as he dared not try to win her love, so he might at least retain the affectionate confidence so precious to him; not allowing himself to hope—not daring to dream of a return of the true and tender passion which each day absorbed him more and more. But with all her natural self-possession, Grace did not recover her self-control so soon as her companion; and while she hunted in her mental preserves for an appropriate subject, to her infinite relief Balfour broke the long silence by observing, in just his

ordinary tone, perhaps a degree more coldly than usual,—

"How long do you think it will take Mrs. Frere to reach Hain?"

"Oh, quite an hour and a half. But I scarcely think she will go up that long hill; they will probably stop at the foot, and wait in the wood."

From The Fortnightly Review.

MISS FERRIER'S NOVELS.*

AN old novel is to some people, I believe, a piece of literature worthy to be ranked with an old newspaper or an old almanack—not quite so dull as the last, a good deal duller than the first, but sharing with both the same distinguishing quality, that of essential incapacity to fulfil the reason of its existence. Students of the philosophy of language may be left to decide whether this is or is not a proof of the singular tyranny of names—an unconscious practical syllogism with the major premiss that a novel must be new. But no one, I think, is likely to contest the fact that such a view of old novels does prevail. If it prevails with any one who is accustomed to read for something else than the mere story, this must be set down to a conviction that in at least the majority of novels there is nothing more than the story, and very often exceedingly little of that. But the books which Mr. Bentley has just reproduced in a handsome and convenient form (so that they neither sprawl over twice their proper portion of the shelves like the ordinary three-volume novel, nor weary the eye with blunt type, close-packed print, and bad paper, like the "Railway" variety) have the reputation at least of belonging to the small class of novels which are not merely more or less hardy annuals. They have very high testimonials, some of which must be known to many people in whose way the books themselves have never fallen. Scott praised them highly, not only, as he was wont to do with perhaps more generosity and good nature than strictly critical exactness, in private, but in his published works. Mackintosh read "Destiny" with an absorption sufficient to make him forget all about an impending dissolution of Parliament, for the news of which he was anxiously waiting. There is praise of

Miss Ferrier in the "Noctes"—praise which certainly does not require forgiveness as in Mr. Tennyson's case. But, above all, there is something curious and, at the present day especially, almost portentous in the fact that Miss Ferrier was content to write three novels, and three only. She had no imperative private reasons for ceasing to write; she had won a great deal of reputation by her books, and (a consideration which certainly would not have weakened the case with most people) she had made money in a most agreeably increasing proportion by her three ventures. "Marriage" brought her in £150; not a magnificent sum, certainly, but more than most novelists even of greater genius have made by their first novels. "The Inheritance" was sold for £1,000, and "Destiny" for £1,700. She might probably have depended on at least as much for a fourth novel. But she persistently refused to write any more, and the probable reason for this refusal (as to which I may have something to say) rather heightens than impairs the merit of the refusal. So she remains in literary history a singular and almost unique figure. Men and women of one book—a book in most cases inspired by some peculiar circumstance or combination of circumstances—are not uncommon. But that an author should live many days, should try the game three several times with result of praise and profit, and then, without any disgust, such as checked Congreve or any sufficient disabling cause, retire from the field, this is certainly a most unusual thing.

Susan Edmonstone Ferrier was born at Edinburgh on the 7th of September, 1782. The memoir which has been prefixed to the new edition of her works, and to which I am indebted for the facts of her biography, enters after the manner of the Scotch with some minuteness into her genealogy and family connections. Among these latter in various distances of ascent, descent, and collateral relation figure the present Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Braxfield (famous as the hero of many anecdotes of judicial and jocular brutality), and some other persons of note. But the principal fact of interest in this kind about Miss Ferrier is that she was aunt of the last of the metaphysicians, as he has sometimes been called, the late Professor Ferrier of St. Andrews. Her father was a writer to the signet, and among his clients was the fifth Duke of Argyll. He and his daughter were frequent visitors at Inveraray, and these

* *Marriage. The Inheritance. Destiny.* By Susan Edmonstone Ferrier. 6 vols. London: R. Bentley & Son. 1882.

visits are said, with pretty evident truth, to have had not a little influence in supplying Miss Ferrier with subjects of study and determining the character and personal arrangement of her books. Whatever criticism these works may be exposed to, even Madame de Staël, in the mood in which (according to a priceless anecdote recounted by Mr. Austen Leigh in his life of his aunt) she returned one of Miss Austen's novels with the disdainful comment, *vulgaire*, could not have objected to the *ton* of Miss Ferrier's people. Her first heroine is an earl's granddaughter; her second, a countess in her own right; her third, the only surviving child of a great Highland chieftain; and in all her books, countesses and duchesses, baronets and Honorable Mr. So-and-so's, "do be jostling each other." This, it is true, was very much the way of the novel of the period, and Miss Austen was almost the first to break through it—indeed, it may be shrewdly suspected that Corinne's fine feelings were secretly shared by a large number of readers, and that this had not a little to do with the comparatively limited success of "Pride and Prejudice" and its fellows. There is, perhaps, present in Miss Ferrier herself, the least little feeling of the same kind; her books contain some excellent sentiments on the vanity of rank and fashion, but somehow they leave on the reader's mind an impression that the author is secretly of Major Pendennis's mind as to the value of good acquaintances, and that it was more comfortable for her to walk down her literary St. James's Street on the arm of an earl than on that of a simple commoner who would have been puzzled to tell the name and status of his grandfather. However this may be, her sketches were at least taken from the life, and she did not, like certain writers of our own day, talk familiarly of the Honorable Jem and the Honorable Jemima on the strength of seeing the one at a respectful distance in a club smoking-room, and the other across some yards of gravel and the railings of Rotten Row.

It is not quite clear at what time "Marriage" was actually begun, but that it was begun in consequence of the Inverary visits and of the company of "fashionables" and of originals there open to an inspection, is pretty clear. It seems to have been planned with a certain Miss Claverling, niece of the Duke of Argyll, who was not only confidante, but was allowed to hold in some small degree the more honorable and responsible position

of collaborator. The book was certainly in great part written before 1810, and was read in manuscript to Lady Charlotte Campbell, who approved of it highly. But though the author saw a great deal of literary society—she and her father visited Scott at Ashiestiel soon after the date just mentioned—the book did not appear till 1818, when it was published by Blackwood. It may be suspected that part of the reason for hesitation was the audacious extent to which (as is acknowledged in the correspondence with Miss Claverling) the characters were taken from living originals. However this may be, it appeared at last and was highly popular, drawing forth immediately after its appearance a public compliment from Sir Walter.

The original idea of "Marriage" is stated correctly enough in a letter to Miss Claverling. It is the introduction of a spoiled child of English fashionable life to a rough Highland home abounding with characters. Mrs. Ferrier's way of working out this conception was to a certain extent conventional—it is doubtful whether, with all her power, she ever got quite as clear of convention as did her admirable contemporary, Jane Austen—but it brings about many very comical and delightful situations. Lady Juliana Lindore is the daughter of a somewhat embarrassed English peer, the Earl of Courtland. Having no idea beyond her collection of pets, the society to which she has been accustomed, and a certain varnish of romance about handsome lovers and love in a cottage with a double coach-house, she receives with consternation her father's announcement that she is to marry an ugly duke. For a time she vacillates, chiefly owing to the splendor of the duke's presents, but at last the good looks of her handsome lover, Harry Douglas, prevail, and the pair elope to Scotland and are married. Douglas has a commission in the Guards, and though he is only the second son of a petty landowner, he has fortunately attracted the attention of a rich bachelor, General Cameron. But the general is disgusted with his favorite's escapade, Lord Courtland disowns his daughter, and after a brief honeymoon there is nothing for it but to accept his father's invitation to the ancestral mansion in the Highlands. The pair set out with man and maid, pug, macaw, and squirrel, and Lady Juliana has pleasant visions of a romantic, but at the same time elegant, retreat where they will sojourn for a short time receiving the atten-

tions of the countryside and giving *fêtes champêtres* in return, and will then return to enjoy the pleasures of London with a handsome endowment from her husband's father. He himself has some misgivings, but having left his home at a very early age, and looking back at it through the "filmy blue" of the past, is by no means prepared for the actual condition of Glenfern. The introduction of the pair to the reality of things takes place as follows:—

The conversation was interrupted; for just at that moment they had gained the summit of a very high hill, and the post-boy, stopping to give his horses breath, turned round to the carriage, pointing at the same time, with a significant gesture, to a tall, thin, gray house, something resembling a tower, that stood in the vale beneath. A small, sullen-looking lake was in front, on whose banks grew neither tree nor shrub. Behind rose a chain of rugged, cloud-capped hills, on the declivities of which were some faint attempts at young plantations; and the only level ground consisted of a few dingy turnip fields, enclosed with stone walls, or dykes, as the post-boy called them. It was now November; the day was raw and cold; and a thick, drizzling rain was beginning to fall. A dreary stillness reigned all around, broken only at intervals by the screams of the sea-fowl that hovered over the lake, on whose dark and troubled waters was dimly described a little boat, plied by one solitary being.

"What a scene!" at length Lady Juliana exclaimed, shuddering as she spoke. "Good God, what a scene! How I pity the unhappy wretches who are doomed to dwell in such a place! and yonder hideous grim house—it makes me sick to look at it. For Heaven's sake, bid him drive on." Another significant look from the driver made the color mount to Douglas's cheek, as he stammered out, "Surely it can't be; yet somehow I don't know. Pray, my lad," letting down one of the glasses, and addressing the post-boy, "what is the name of that house?"

"Hoose!" repeated the driver; "ca' ye thon a hoose? Thon's gude Glenfern Castle."

Disenchantment follows disenchantment. Glenfern is a sufficiently commodious but quite uncivilized mansion, and its inhabitants consist of the father, a well-meaning chieftain, his three maiden sisters (Miss Jacky, the sensible woman of the parish, Miss Nicky, who is a notable housewife, and Miss Grizzy, who is nothing in particular), and five daughters. The eldest son with his wife abides at a short distance. Very short experience of these circumstances suffices to reduce Lady Juliana to hysterics, which are treated by the aunts in the following fashion:—

"Oh, the amiable creature!" interrupted the unsuspecting spinsters, almost stifling her with their caresses as they spoke: "Welcome, a thousand times welcome, to Glenfern Castle," said Miss Jacky, who was esteemed by much the most sensible woman, as well as the greatest orator in the whole parish; "nothing shall be wanting, dearest Lady Juliana, to compensate for a parent's rigor, and make you happy and comfortable. Consider this as your future home! My sisters and myself will be as mothers to you; and see these charming young creatures," dragging forward two tall, frightened girls, with sandy hair and great, purple arms; "thank Providence for having blest you with such sisters!" "Don't speak too much, Jacky, to our dear niece at present," said Miss Grizzy; "I think one of Lady MacLaughlan's composing draughts would be the best thing for her."

"Composing draughts at this time of day!" cried Miss Nicky; "I should think a little good broth a much wiser thing. There are some excellent family broth making below, and I'll desire Tibby to bring a few."

"Will you take a little soup, love?" asked Douglas. His lady assented; and Miss Nicky vanished, but quickly re-entered, followed by Tibby, carrying a huge bowl of coarse broth, swimming with leeks, greens, and grease. Lady Juliana attempted to taste it; but her delicate palate revolted at the homely fare; and she gave up the attempt, in spite of Miss Nicky's earnest entreaties to take a few more of these excellent family broth.

"I should think," said Henry, as he vainly attempted to stir it round, "that a little wine would be more to the purpose than this stuff."

The aunts looked at each other; and, withdrawing to a corner, a whispering consultation took place, in which Lady MacLaughlan's opinion, "birch, balm, currant, heating, cooling, running risks," etc., etc., transpired. At length the question was carried; and some tolerable sherry and a piece of very substantial *short-bread* were produced.

What follows may be guessed without much difficulty, though the recital is well worth reading. Lady Juliana wearies her husband and his relatives with every possible demonstration of insolence and folly. The pipes make her faint; her favorite beasts and birds (which the old-fashioned politeness of the laird and a certain respect for her rank will not permit him to banish) become the nuisances of the house; and though she condescends to stay at Glenfern until she has enriched the family tree with a new generation—Major Douglas, the eldest son, has no children—she shows more and more her utter vacuity of mind, her want of real affection for her unlucky husband, and the impossibility of satisfying her by any concessions consistent with the means of the family. After a time, how-

ever, a new personage appears on the scene in the person of Lady MacLaughlan, one of the strongest and most original characters who had yet found a home in English fiction. Her defects are two only, that she is admitted to be very nearly a photograph from the life, and that, like too many of the characters of "Marriage," she has but very little to do with the story. Lady MacLaughlan's humors are almost infinite, and can hardly hope to represent themselves in any sufficient manner by dint of extract. She is a sort of cross between Lady Bountiful and Lady Kew, a mixture which will be admitted to be original, especially as one of the component parts had not yet been separately presented at all to the public. This is the fashion of her introduction:—

Out of this equipage issued a figure, clothed in a light-colored, large-flowered chintz raiment, carefully drawn through the pocket-holes, either for its own preservation, or the more disinterested purpose of displaying a dark, short, stuff petticoat, which, with the same liberality, afforded ample scope for the survey of a pair of worsted stockings and black leather shoes, something resembling buckets. A faded red cloth jacket, which bore evident marks of having been severed from its native skirts, now acted in the capacity of a spencer. On the head rose a stupendous fabric, in the form of a cap, on the summit of which was placed a black beaver hat, tied *à la poissarde*. A small black satin muff in one hand, and a gold-headed walking-stick in the other, completed the dress and decoration of this personage.

Lady MacLaughlan has a Smollett-like husband who is a hopeless cripple, and she is a tyrant to her friends, and especially to "the girls," as she calls the aunts at Glenfern, but she has plenty of brains. An excellent scene, though like many in the book rather of an extravagant kind, is that where the Glenfern party have come to dine with her on a wrong day. They make their way into the house with the utmost difficulty, surprise Sir Sampson MacLaughlan in undress, and only at last are ushered into the redoubtable presence:—

After ascending several long, dark stairs, and following divers windings and turnings, the party at length reached the door of the *sanctum sanctorum*, and having gently tapped, the voice of the priestess was heard in no very encouraging accents, demanding "Who was there?"

"It's only us," replied her trembling friend.

"Only us? humph! I wonder what fool is called *only us*! Open the door, Philistine, and see what *only us* wants."

The door was opened and the party entered. The day was closing in, but by the faint twilight that mingled with the gleams from a smoky, smouldering fire, Lady MacLaughlan was dimly discernible, as she stood upon the hearth, watching the contents of an enormous kettle that emitted both steam and odor. She regarded the invaders with her usual marble aspect, and without moving either joint or muscle as they drew near.

"I declare—I don't think you know us, Lady MacLaughlan," said Miss Grizzy in a tone of affected vivacity, with which she strove to conceal her agitation.

"Know you!" repeated her friend—"humph! Who you are, I know very well; but what brings you here, I do *not* know. Do you know yourselves?"

"I declare—I can't conceive——" began Miss Grizzy; but her trepidation arrested her speech, and her sister therefore proceeded—

"Your ladyship's declaration is no less astonishing than incomprehensible. We have waited upon you by your own express invitation on the day appointed by yourself; and we have been received in a manner, I must say, we did not expect, considering this is the first visit of our niece Lady Juliana Douglas."

"I'll tell you what, girls," replied their friend, as she still stood with her back to the fire, and her hands behind her; "I'll tell you what,—you are not yourselves—you are all lost—quite mad—that's all—humph!"

"If that's the case, we cannot be fit company for your ladyship," retorted Miss Jacky warmly; "and therefore the best thing we can do is to return the way we came. Come, Lady Juliana—come, sister."

"I declare, Jacky, the impetuosity of your temper is—I really cannot stand it——" and the gentle Grizzy gave way to a flood of tears.

"You used to be rational, intelligent creatures," resumed her ladyship; "but what has come over you, I don't know. You come tumbling in here at the middle of the night—and at the top of the house—nobody knows how—when I never was thinking of you; and because I don't tell a parcel of lies, and pretend I expected you, you are for flying off again—humph! Is this the behaviour of women in their senses? But since you are here, you may as well sit down and say what brought you. Get down, Gil Blas—go along, Tom Jones," addressing two huge cats, who occupied a three-cornered leather chair by the fireside, and who relinquished it with much reluctance.

"How do you do, pretty creature?" kissing Lady Juliana, as she seated her in this cat's cradle. "Now, girls, sit down, and tell what brought you here to-day—humph!"

"Can your ladyship ask such a question, after having formally invited us?" demanded the wrathful Jacky.

"I'll tell you what, girls; you were just as much invited by me to dine here to-day as you were appointed to sup with the grand seignior—humph!"

"What day of the week does your ladyship call this?"

"I call it Tuesday; but I suppose the Glenferm calendar calls it Thursday: Thursday was the day I invited you to come."

"I'm sure — I'm thankful we're got to the bottom of it at last," cried Miss Grizzy; "I read it, because I'm sure you wrote it, Tuesday."

"How could you be such a fool, my love, as to read it any such thing? Even if it had been written Tuesday, you might have had the sense to know it meant Thursday. When did you know me invite anybody for a Tuesday?"

"I declare it's very true; I certainly ought to have known better. I am quite confounded at my own stupidity; for as you observe, even though you had said Tuesday, I might have known that you must have meant Thursday."

"Well, well, no more about it. Since you are here you must stay here, and you must have something to eat, I suppose. Sir Sampson and I have dined two hours ago; but you shall have your dinner for all that. I must shut shop for this day, it seems, and leave my resuscitating tincture all in the deadthraw — Methusalem pills quite in their infancy. But there's no help for it. Since you are here you must stay here, and you must be fed and lodged; so get along, girls, get along. Here, Gil Blas — come, Tom Jones." And, preceded by her cats, and followed by her guests, she led the way to the parlor.

The humors of Glenferm and its neighborhood, however, come to an end before long. The offer of a farm to Harry Douglas by his good-natured old father and his wife's utter horror at the idea, the birth of twin girls for whom their mother entertains no feelings but profound disgust, and the general revolt of the whole family at Lady Juliana are happily succeeded by the relenting of General Cameron. He procures the restoration of the commission which Douglas has forfeited by breaking his leave, and gives him a handsome allowance. One of the twins is left to the care of Mrs. Douglas, the elder brother's wife, the other accompanies her parents to London. But Lady Juliana's senseless folly once more ruins her husband. Her discourtesy to General Cameron alienates him, her insane extravagance far outruns the allowance which even while marrying and disinheriting Harry he does not withhold. Douglas goes on foreign service and practically nothing more is heard of him. Lady Juliana finds a home with her daughter Adelaide in the house of her brother, who has been deserted by his wife. A long gap occurs in the chronology, and the story is resumed when Adelaide and Mary (whom her mother has practically forgotten) are

grown up. It is thought proper (much to Lady Juliana's disgust) that her daughter shall pay her a visit, and the second volume of the novel is occupied by the history of this. On the way to England there is a lively episode in which Mary Douglas is taken to see an ancient great-aunt in Edinburgh, whose account of the "improvements" of modern days is not a little amusing. Mrs. MacShake, indeed, is one of those originals, evidently studies from the life, whom Miss Ferrier could draw with a somewhat malicious but an admirably graphic pen. Similar characters of a redeeming kind in the second part of the book are Dr. Redgill, Lord Courtland's house physician, a parasite of a bygone but extremely amusing type, and Lady Emily, Lord Courtland's daughter, who is one of a class of young women whom for some incomprehensible reason no novelist before Miss Austen dared to make a heroine of. Mary herself, who is the heroine, is a great trial to the modern reader.

"I am now to meet my mother!" thought she; and, unconscious of everything else, she was assisted from the carriage, and conducted into the house. A door was thrown open; but shrinking from the glare of light and sound of voices that assailed her, she stood dazzled and dismayed, till she beheld a figure approaching that she guessed to be her mother. Her heart beat violently — a film was upon her eyes — she made an effort to reach her mother's arms, and sank lifeless on her bosom!

Lady Juliana, for such it was, doubted not but that her daughter was really dead; for though she talked of fainting every hour of the day herself, still what is emphatically called a *dead-faint* was a spectacle no less strange than shocking to her. She was therefore sufficiently alarmed and overcome to behave in a very interesting manner; and some yearnings of pity even possessed her heart as she beheld her daughter's lifeless form extended before her — her beautiful, though inanimate features, half hid by the profusion of golden ringlets that fell around her. But these kindly feelings were of short duration; for no sooner was the nature of her daughter's insensibility ascertained, than all her former hostility returned, as she found every one's attention directed to Mary, and she herself entirely overlooked in the general interest she had excited; and her displeasure was still further increased as Mary, at length slowly unclosing her eyes, stretched out her hands, and faintly articulated, "My mother!"

In the same way "trembling violently" she is ready to fall upon her sister's neck, a proceeding to which her sister (a young woman leaving something to desire in point of morality, but sensible enough)

strongly objects. This second volume includes, besides the capital figure of Dr. Redgill (to whom I regret that justice cannot be done, by extracts), not a few isolated studies of the ridiculous which can hardly be too highly spoken of. The drawback is that they have no more than the faintest connection with the story as such; indeed, it can hardly be said that there is any story in "Marriage." It is a collection of exceedingly clever caricatures, some of which deserve a higher title, and the best of which will rank with the best originals in English fiction.

Six years passed between the appearance of "Marriage" and the appearance of "The Inheritance." The practical success of the earlier book may best be judged by the fact that while "Marriage" brought Miss Ferrier in £150, Blackwood, who had published it, gave her more than six times as much for the new novel. For once difference of price and profit corresponded not unduly to difference of merit. The individual studies and characters of "The Inheritance" are as good as those of "Marriage," while the novel, as a novel, is infinitely better. In her first work the author had been content to string together amusing caricatures or portraits without any but a rudimentary attempt at central interest. "The Inheritance," if its plot is of no great intricacy (Miss Ferrier was never famous for plots), is at any rate decently *charpenté*, and the excellent studies of character, which make it delightful to read, are bound together with a very respectable cement of narrative. "The Inheritance" is the earldom and estates of Rossville, which, by a chapter of accidents, devolve on Gertrude St. Clair, the only daughter of a younger and misallied brother of the reigning earl, as inheritor presumptive. She and her mother are invited to Rossville Castle, the inhabitants of which are the reigning earl and his sister, Lady Betty. Lady Betty is a nonentity, Lord Rossville a pompous fool, who delights in his own eloquence.

The Rossville society is completed by three nephews, with one of whom Gertrude is intended to fall in love, with another of whom she ought to fall in love, and (as a natural consequence) with the third of whom she does fall in love. The remaining characters of the book are more numerous than is the case in "Marriage," and much better grouped. Miss Pratt, a talkative cousin of the Rossville family, is one of the few characters in Miss Ferrier's books who can afford comparison

with those of Miss Austen. She is constantly citing the witticisms of a certain Anthony Whyte, who may be justly said to be an ancestor of Mrs. Harris, inasmuch as he is always talked about and never seen. She is also foredoomed to cross the soul of Lord Rossville, whose feelings of decency she outrages by proposing that a large company shall visit his dressing-room, whose elaborate sentences she constantly interrupts, and whom she finally kills, by making her appearance in a hearse, the only vehicle which she has been able to engage to convey her through a snowstorm. The other branch of Gertrude's connections, however, furnish their full share to the gallery of satirical portraits. The Blacks, Mrs. St. Clair's relations, have improved somewhat in circumstances since she made a stolen match with her husband, and they are now on the outskirts of county society. The eldest daughter is engaged to a wealthy and fairly well-connected nabob, Major Waddell, and on this unlucky pair Miss Ferrier concentrates the whole weight of her sarcasm, especially on Miss Bell Black, the bride elect, who is always talking about "my situation." The gem, however, of this part of the book is the following letter from Lilly Black, the second sister and bridesmaid, who, according to old fashion, accompanies Major and Mrs. Waddell on their bridal tour. Jeffrey is said to have admired this particularly, which shows that the awful Aristarch of Craigcrook, when his prejudices were not concerned, and when new planets did not swim too impertinently into his ken, was quite ready to give them welcome.

The following letters were put into Gertrude's hand one morning. The first she opened was sealed with an evergreen leaf; motto, *Je ne change qu'en mourant*.

"I am inexpressibly pained to think what an opinion my dearest cousin must have formed of me, from having allowed so much time to elapse ere I commenced a correspondence from which, believe me, I expect to derive the most unfeigned and heartfelt delight. But you, my dear friend, whose fate it has been to roam, 'and other realms to view,' will, I am sure, make allowance for the apparent neglect and unkindness I have been guilty of, which, be assured, was very far from designed on my part. Indeed, scarce a day has elapsed since we parted that I have not planned taking up my pen to address you, and to attempt to convey to you some idea, however faint, of all I have seen and felt since bidding adieu to Caledonia. But, alas! so many of the vulgar cares of life obtrude themselves even here, in 'wilds unknown to public view,' as have left me little leisure for the interchange of thought.

"Were it not for these annoyances, and the want of a congenial soul to pour forth my feelings to, I could almost imagine myself in Paradise. *A propos*, is a certain regiment still at B., and have you got acquainted with any of the officers yet? You will perhaps be tempted to smile at that question; but I assure you there is nothing at all in it. The Major and Bell (or Mrs. Major Waddell, as she wishes to be called in future, as she thinks Bell too familiar an appellation for a married woman) are, I think, an uncommon happy, attached pair—the only drawback to their happiness is the Major's having been particularly bilious of late, which he ascribes to the heat of the weather, but expects to derive the greatest benefit from the waters of Harrowgate. For my part, I am sure many a 'longing, lingering look' I shall cast behind when we bid adieu to the sylvan shores of Winander. I have attempted some views of it, which may serve to carry to you some idea of its beauties. One on a watch-paper, I think my most successful effort. The Major has rallied me a good deal as to who that is intended for; but positively that is all a joke, I do assure you. But it is time that I should now attempt to give you some account of my travels, though, as I promise myself the delight of showing you my journal when we meet, I shall omit the detail of our journey, and at once waft you to what I call Lake Land. But where shall I find language to express my admiration!

"One thing I must not omit to mention, in order that you may be able to conceive some idea of the delight we experienced, and for which we were indebted to the Major's politeness and gallantry. In order to surprise us, he proposed our taking a little quiet sail, as he termed it, on the lake. All was silence; when, upon a signal made, figure to yourself the astonishment and delight of Mrs. Major and myself, when a grand flourish of French horns burst upon our ears, waking the echoes all round; the delightful harmony was repeated from every recess which echo haunted on the borders of the lake. At first, indeed, the surprise was almost too much for Mrs. Major, and she became a little hysterical, but she was soon recovered by the Major's tenderness and assurances of safety. Indeed he is, without exception, the most exemplary and devoted husband I ever beheld; still I confess (but that is *entre nous*), that to me, the little taste he displays for the tuneless Nine would be a great drawback to my matrimonial felicity.

"After having enjoyed this delightful concert, we bade a long adieu to the sylvan shores of Ulls Water, and proceeded to Keswick, or, as it is properly denominated, Derwent Water, which is about three miles long; its pure, transparent bosom studded with numberless wooded islands, and its sides beautifully variegated with elegant mansions, snow-white cottages, taper spires, pleasant fields, adorned by the hand of cultivation, and towering groves that seem as if impervious to the light of day. The celebrated Fall of Lodore I shall not at-

tempt to depict; but figure, if you can, a stupendous cataract, rushing headlong over enormous rocks and crags, which vainly seem to oppose themselves in its progress.

"With regret we tore ourselves from the cultivated beauties of Derwent, and taking a look, *en passant*, of the more secluded Grassmere and Rydall, we at length found ourselves on the shores of the magnificent Winander.

"Picture to yourself, if it be possible, stupendous mountains rearing their cloud-capped heads in all the sublimity of horror, while an immense sheet of azure reflected the crimson and yellow rays of the setting sun as they floated o'er its motionless, green bosom, on which was impressed the bright image of the surrounding woods and meadows, speckled with snowy cottages and elegant villas! I really felt as if inspired, so much was my enthusiasm kindled, and yet I fear my description will fail in conveying to you any idea of this never-to-be-forgotten scene. But I must now bid you adieu, which I do with the greatest reluctance. How thought flows upon me when I take up my pen! how inconceivable to me the distaste which some people express for letter-writing! *Scribbling*, as they contemptuously term it. How I pity such vulgar souls! You, my dear cousin, I am sure, are not one of them. I have scarcely left room for Mrs. Major to add a PS. Adieu! Your affectionate

"LILLY."

Mrs. Waddell's postscript was as follows:—
"MA CHERE COUSINE—Of course you cannot expect that I, a married woman, can possibly have much time to devote to my female friends, with an adoring husband, who never stirs from my side, and to whom my every thought is due. But this much, in justice to myself, I think it proper to say, that I am the happiest of my sex, and that I find my Waddell everything generous, kind, and brave!"

"ISABELLA WADDELL."

There are not many better things than this of the kind, and it is matched by a long passage (too long, unhappily, to quote) as to a certain Miss Becky Duguid, an old maid, and a victim of commissions and such-like sacrifices to friendship. But one passage also dealing with the Black family must be given to show the keenness of Miss Ferrier's observation, and the neatness of her satirical expression:—

Mrs. Fairbairn was one of those ladies who, from the time she became a mother, ceased to be anything else. All the duties, pleasures, charities, and decencies of life were henceforth concentrated in that one grand characteristic; every object in life was henceforth viewed through that single medium. Her own mother was no longer her mother; she was the grandmother of her dear infants, her brothers and sisters were mere uncles and aunts, and even her husband ceased to be thought of as her

husband from the time he became a father. He was no longer the being who had claims on her time, her thoughts, her talents, her affections; he was simply Mr. Fairbairn, the noun masculine of Mrs. Fairbairn, and the father of her children. Happily for Mr. Fairbairn, he was not a person of very nice feelings or refined taste; and although at first he did feel a little unpleasant when he saw how much his children were preferred to himself, yet in time he became accustomed to it, then came to look upon Mrs. Fairbairn as the most exemplary of mothers, and finally resolved himself into the father of a very fine family, of which Mrs. Fairbairn was the mother. In all this there was more of selfish egotism and animal instinct than of rational affection or Christian principle; but both parents piqued themselves upon their fondness for their offspring, as if it were a feeling peculiar to themselves, and not one they shared in common with the lowest and weakest of their species. Like them, too, it was upon the bodies of their children that they lavished their chief care and tenderness, for, as to the immortal interests of their souls, or the cultivation of their minds, or the improvement of their tempers, these were but little attended to, at least in comparison of their health and personal appearance.

Such passages are fair, but not extraordinarily favorable examples of the faculty of satire (a little "hard" perhaps, as even her admirers acknowledged it to be, but admirably clear-sighted and felicitous in expression) with which Miss Ferrier illustrated all her novels, and especially this her masterpiece. The general story of "The Inheritance" is, however, quite sufficiently interesting and well-managed, even without the embroidery of character study. Lord Rossville, a well-meaning but short-sighted man, begins to suspect, rightly enough in general, but wrongly in particular, that his heiress is likely to be disobedient to his desire that she shall marry her cousin (and failing her, his next heir), Mr. Delmour, a dull politician. She boldly tells him that she cannot marry Mr. Delmour, and he threatens to disinherit her, but before his mind is fully made up he dies suddenly, and she succeeds. Her lover, the younger brother of Mr. Delmour, has shown signs of interest which might be suspicious to a less guileless person than Gertrude, but the chapter of accidents enables him to regain his position, and he is more attentive than ever to the Countess of Rossville in her own right. Luckily an old promise to her mother prevents her from marrying at once. But at her lover's suggestion she goes up to London, is introduced by him to fashionable society,

indulges in all sorts of expense and folly (Miss Ferrier is great on the expense and folly of London life, and the wickedness of absenteeism), and neglects the good works at Rossville, in which the third cousin Lindsay, the virtuous hero of the story, has interested her before. At last she returns to her home, and a storm, which has long been brewing, breaks. A stranger, who has before been introduced as mysteriously threatening and annoying Mrs. St. Clair, makes himself more objectionable than ever, forcing his way into the castle, wantonly exhibiting his power over the mother, and through her over her indignant daughter, and by degrees making himself wholly intolerable. At last the mystery is disclosed. Gertrude is not Countess of Rossville at all, nor even daughter of Mrs. St. Clair. She is a supposititious child whom her ambitious mother (so-called) has taken for the purpose of foisting her as heiress on the Rossville family. At first it seems as if she were to suffer the intolerable punishment of being handed over to the scoundrel Lewiston as his daughter, but his pretensions to her are so far disproved. *Cetera quis nescit?* The faithless Colonel Delmour flies off, the good Lindsay remains, and a course of accidents replaces Gertrude as mistress (though not in her own right) at Rossville Castle.

"The Inheritance" is a book which really deserves a great deal of praise. Almost the only exceptions to be taken to it are the rather violent alternations of *ἀναιδία* and *περιτρία*, which lead to the conclusion, and the mismanagement of the figure of Lewiston. This ruffian is represented as a Yankee, but he is not in the least like either the American of history or the conventional Yankee of fiction and the stage. He is clearly a character for whom the author had no type ready in her memory or experience, and whom she consequently invented partly out of her own head and partly from such rather inappropriate stock-models of villains as she happened to be acquainted with. He is not probable in himself, nor are his actions probable, for a business-like scoundrel such as he is represented to be would have known perfectly well that forcing himself into Rossville Castle, and behaving as if it were his own property, was an almost certain method of killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. But these faults are not of the first importance, and the general merits of the book are very great. Gertrude herself is a consistent, lifelike, and agreeable character, neither

too sentimental nor too humorous, but perfectly human; all the other characters group well round her, and as for the merely satirical passages and personages they are wholly admirable.

"The Inheritance" was more popular even than "Marriage" had been; but the author still refused to be hurried into production. She had always been very coy about acknowledging her work — all her books were published anonymously — and she was accustomed to write (though that operation may seem a harmless one enough) with as much secrecy as Miss Austen herself observed. But Sir Walter Scott was taken into confidence as to the publication of "Destiny," and through his good offices with Cadell she obtained a much larger sum for it than she had hitherto received. The book is an advance even upon "The Inheritance," and much more upon "Marriage," in unity and completeness of plot, and it contains two or three of Miss Ferrier's most elaborate and finished pictures of oddities. But, as it seems to me, there is a considerable falling off in *verve* and spontaneity. The story interest of the book centres on the fortunes of Glenroy, a Highland chieftain of large property, and his daughter Edith. In former days an appanage of considerable extent has been carved out of the Glenroy property, and this at the date of the story has fallen in to a distant relation of the family, who is childless, and who visits the country for the first time. Glenroy, petty tyrant though he is at home, condescends to court this kinsman for the sake of his inheritance. The old man, however, who is both ill-natured and parsimonious, and who is revolted by the luxurious waste of Glenroy's household, leaves the property, under rather singular conditions, to certain poor relations of Glenroy's, Ronald Malcolm, a boy about the same age as the chief's son, Norman, and his nephew Reginald, being the special heir. This boy goes to sea, and what may be called one branch of the plot concerns his disappearance and his unwillingness, by making himself known after a long absence, to oust his father from the property (as under the settlement he would be obliged to do). The other branch, which is reunited with this first branch rather adroitly, springs in this wise. Glenroy, somewhat late in life, and after the birth of his children Norman and Edith, has married Lady Elizabeth Waldegrave, a reproduction of Lady Juliana in "Marriage." She has one daughter, who, by the death of

relations, becomes a peeress in her own right (Miss Ferrier, it will be observed, has a genuinely Scotch objection to limiting the descent of honors to heirs male), and Lady Elizabeth having quarrelled with her husband, is very glad to take her daughter Florinda away with her. Only after many years does she return, and the rivalry (unconscious on Edith's part) between Glenroy's daughter and the English peeress for the hand of Reginald gives rise to some good scenes. Norman Malcolm, the heir, has died already, and after a short period of dotage Glenroy himself follows, leaving his daughter totally unprovided for, in consequence of his belief in her approaching marriage to Reginald, on whom the estates devolve. Edith's subsequent fortunes (for, as may be readily imagined, the beautiful and wealthy Florinda carries the day); her stay with some Cockney connections of her mother's; the unlucky relations (again much copied from "Marriage") of Reginald and Florinda, all lead up to the final reappearance of Ronald and the necessary marriage bells.

The lighter dishes of this particular banquet consist of a *Hausfrau*, Madame Latour (who is perhaps somewhat indebted to Miss Edgeworth); of the Cockney pair, Mr. and Mrs. Ribley, amusing but conventional; of the chief's two dependants and butts, Benbowie, a cocklaid of his own clan, and Mrs. Macaulay, a good-hearted, poor relation, who plays the mother to Edith; and, above all, of Mr. McDow, the minister of the parish. This last portrait is a satire of what Dryden called the "bloody" kind (the same word in the same sense is used to this day in the politest French, and I do not know why English should be more squeamish), on the foibles of the Presbyterian clergy. Jeffrey is said to have pronounced Mr. McDow an entire and perfect chrysolite. With his "moderate" opinions, his constant hunger and thirst after decreets and augmentations (it may be explained to those who do not know Scotland that a minister of the Established Church, unlike his English compeer, is enabled, if he chooses, to be a perpetual thorn in the sides of the owners of real property in his parish by claims for increased stipend, repairs to the manse, etc.), his vulgarity, his stupid jokes, his unfailing presence as an uninvited guest at every feast, there is no doubt of the truth of the picture or of the strength of the satire. But Miss Ferrier occasionally lets her acid bite a little too deeply, and it may be thought that

she has done this here. Mr. McDow has the same fault as some of Flaubert's characters—he is too uniformly disgusting. A testimonial to this man, who is a model, be it remembered, of coarseness, ignorance, stupidity, and selfish neglect of his duties, is a good specimen of the sharp strokes which Miss Ferrier constantly dealt to the vices and follies of society—strokes sharper perhaps than any lady novelist, except George Eliot, has cared or known how to aim:—

MY DEAR SIR,—It is with the most unfeigned satisfaction I take up my pen to bear my public testimony to worth such as yours, enriched and adorned as it is with abilities of the first order—polished and refined by all that learning can bestow. From the early period at which our friendship commenced few, I flatter myself, can boast of a more intimate acquaintance with you than myself; but such is the retiring modesty of your nature, that I fear, were I to express the high sense I entertain of your merit, I might wound that delicacy which is so prominent a feature in your character. I shall therefore merely affirm, that your talents I consider as of the very highest order; your learning and erudition are deep, various, and profound; while your scholastic researches have ever been conducted on the broad basis of Christian moderation and gentlemanly liberality. Your doctrines I look upon as of the most sound, practical description, calculated to superinduce the clearest and most comprehensive system of Christian morals, to which your own character and conduct afford an apt illustration. As a preacher, your language is nervous, copious, and highly rhetorical; your action in the pulpit free, easy, and graceful. As a companion your colloquial powers are of no ordinary description, while the dignity of your manners, combined with the suavity of your address, render your company universally sought after in the very first society. In short, to sum up the whole, I know no man more likely than yourself to adorn the gospel, both by your precept and example. With the utmost esteem and respect,

I am, dear sir,

Most faithfully and sincerely yours,

RODERICK M'CRAW,
Professor of Belles-Lettres.

"Destiny" was published in 1831, and was its author's last work. Nothing else from her pen has been published to my knowledge, except the brief reminiscences of visits to Ashiestiel and Abbotsford, which appeared in *Temple Bar* some years ago, and are reprinted in this edition. Her silence was not owing to want of invitation to write, for London publishers offered her handsome terms; but she could not please herself with any idea

that occurred to her, and accordingly declined the offers. Indeed, there are not, I think, wanting signs in "Destiny" that a fourth book would have been a failure. She was no longer young; her stock of originals, taken *sur le vif*, was probably exhausted; her old sarcastic pleasure in cynical delineation was giving way to a somewhat pietistic view of things which is very noticeable in her last novel; and, to crown all, she was in failing health and suffered especially from impaired eyesight. Yet she survived the publication of "Destiny" for nearly a quarter of a century, and did not die till November, 1854, at the age of seventy-two.

Miss Ferrier's characteristics as a novelist are well marked and not likely to escape any reader. But nothing brings them out so clearly as the inevitable comparison with her great contemporary, Miss Austen. Of the many divisions which may be made between different classes of fiction writers, there is one which is perhaps as clearly visible, though it is perhaps not so frequently drawn, as any. There is one set of novelists (Le Sage, Fielding, Thackeray, Miss Austen, are among its most illustrious names) whose work always seems like a section of actual life, with only the necessary differential of artistic treatment. There is another, with Balzac and Dickens for its most popular exponents, and Balzac alone for its greatest practitioner, whose work, if not false, is always more or less abnormal. In the one case the scenes on the stage are the home, the forum, the streets which all know or might have known if they had lived at the time and place of the story. These writers have each in his or her own degree something of the universality and truth of Shakespeare. No special knowledge is needed to appreciate them; no one is likely in reading them to stop himself to ask—Is this possible or probable? In the other case the spectator is led through a series of museums, many if not most of the objects in which are extraordinary specimens, "sports," monstrosities; while some, perhaps, are like the quaint creations of Waterton's fancy and ingenuity—something more than monsters, mere deliberate things of shreds and patches more or less cleverly made to look as if they might have been at some time or other *viables*. Of these two schools, Miss Ferrier belongs to the last, though she is not by any means an extreme practitioner in it. A moment's thought will show that the system of relying for the most part

on thumb-nail sketches which she avowedly practised leads to this result. Not only is the observer prompted to take the most strongly marked and eccentric specimens in his or her range of observation, but in copying them the invariable result of imitation, the deepening of the strokes, and the hardening of the lines, leads to further departure from the common form. These eccentricities, too, whether copied or imagined, fit but awkwardly into any regular plot. The novelist is as much tempted to let her story take care of itself while she is emphasizing her "humors," as another kind of novelist is tempted to let it take care of itself while he is discoursing to his readers about his characters, or about things in general. Hence the sort of writing which was Miss Ferrier's particular *forte* leads to two inconveniences — the neglect of a congruous and sufficient central interest, and the paying of disproportionate attention to minor characters. The contrast, therefore, even of "The Inheritance" with, let us say, "Pride and Prejudice" is a curious one, and no reader can miss the want in the later book of the wonderful perspective and proportion, the classical avoidance of exaggeration, which mark Miss Austen's masterpiece. On the other hand, it is interesting enough to let the imagination attempt to conceive what Miss Ferrier would have made of Lady Catherine, of Mr. Collins, of the Meryton vulgarities. The satire would be as sharp, but it would be rougher, the instrument would be rather a saw than a razor, and the executioner would linger over her task with a certain affectionate forgetfulness that she had other things to do than to vivisection.

Notwithstanding this drawback, notwithstanding her admitted inability to manage pathos (which in her hands becomes mere *sensibilité* of an obviously unreal kind), and lastly, notwithstanding her occasional didactic passages which are simply a bore, Miss Ferrier is an admirable novelist, especially for those who can enjoy unsparing social satire and a masterly faculty of caricature. She writes, as far as mere writing goes, well, and not unfrequently exceedingly well. It is obvious, not so much from her quotations, for they are dubious evidence, but from the general tone of her work that she was thoroughly well read. There are comparatively few Scotticisms in her, and she has a knack of dry sarcasm which continues the best traditions of the eighteenth century in its freedom from mere

quaintness and grotesque. The character of Glenroy at the beginning of "Destiny" is nearly as well written as St. Evremont himself could have done it, and the sentence which concludes it is a good example of its manner. "As it was impossible, however, that any one so great in himself could make a great marriage, his friends and followers, being reasonable people, merely expected that he would make the best marriage possible." This little sentence, with the admirable piece of *galimatias* already quoted from Mrs. St. Clair's interview with Lord Rossville, and the description in "Marriage" of Miss Becky Douglas's arms as "strapped back by means of a pink ribbon of no ordinary strength or doubtful hue," are examples taken at random of the verbal shafts which Miss Ferrier scatters all about her pages to the great delight of those who have alertness of mind enough to perceive, and good taste or ill-nature enough (for both explanations may be given) to enjoy them.

Her main claim, however, to be read is unquestionably in her gallery of originals, or (as it has been, with the dispassionateness of a critic who does not want to make his goose too much of a swan, called) her museum of abnormalities. They may or may not have places assigned to them rather too prominent for the general harmony of the picture. They may or may not be exaggerated. There may or may not be a certain likeness to the fiendish conduct of the ancestor of the author's friend, Lord Cassilis, in the manner in which she carefully oils them, and as carefully disposes them on the gridiron for roasting. But they are excellent company. The three aunts, Lady MacLaughlan, Mrs. MacShake, Dr. Redgill, and in a minor degree the Bath *précieuses* in "Marriage," Lord Rossville, Miss Pratt, Adam Ramsay, and above all "Mrs. Major" in "The Inheritance," Molly Macaulay, Mr. McDow, and the Ribleys, in "Destiny," are persons with whom the reader is delighted to meet, sorry to part, and (if he have any affection for good novels) certain to meet again. When it is added that though she does not often indulge it, Miss Ferrier possesses a remarkable talent for description, it will be seen that she has no mean claims. Indeed, of the four requisites of the novelist, plot, character, description, and dialogue, she is only weak in the first. The lapse of an entire half-century and a complete change of manners have put her books to the hardest test they are ever

likely to have to endure; and they come through it triumphantly.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

From Fraser's Magazine.

HOW GILBERT SHERARD FARED IN THE FLOOD.

CHAPTER I.

THE FLOOD AND GILBERT SHERARD.

It had rained all day and all night, and on the day before and the day before that—a steady, heavy downpour, with scarcely any intermission. It was the culmination of nearly a month of wet weather of the worst kind—dull, persevering, continuous—and the waters were “out” all over the country; such a flood had scarcely been known in the neighborhood. A slow-moving river, hemmed in with low hills on either hand, was fed by persistent supplies from the high gathering grounds of the rain above, while the egress from the district was stopped by the weir of a mill below, which dammed back the water on the unlucky dwellers along its course. It was a perpetually recurring grievance, but as hopeless in the eyes of the neighborhood as the weather itself. It had been so always and always would be.

Long lines of level bright water had taken the place of the plain of dark-green meadows, it covered the roads, the ditches, the lower part of the hedges, smoothing over the rough places and all the smaller variations of the ground into one flat, white surface, reflecting the dull, leaden sky and the dull, drifting clouds, which hung heavily or were driven by the wind, as the only change for the last month.

A solitary old farmhouse, backed by a group of tall elms, stood not far from what in ordinary times was the river, but which now looked like a large lake. The deep, purple shadows of the red brick, the roofs hipped at the end, and variegated with yellow lichen, the little dormer gables on the sides, looked warm and comfortable in ordinary times, but now, “up to its knees in water, ’twere soppy and soaken and sodden to no end,” as old Esau the carter observed, with the usual alliterative ring of the country dialect.

A row of draggled fowls were sitting disconsolately on the top rail of a submerged fence, the low-lying farmyard was almost under water, and a couple of cows stood drenched on the only place left

dry in the sea of mud. There was something aggravating in the unfeeling enjoyment of half-a-dozen white ducks, which, looking cleaner and brisker even than usual, were swimming merrily over the drowned land in all directions, the only living things which did not suffer, and who were comfortably insensible to the sufferings of others. The afternoon was beginning to close in; there had been a lull in the rain, but now the drizzle seemed to increase.

“Them horses mun come out to-night,” said their young master, Gilbert Sherard, looking dolefully up at the sky; “there’s more rain in yon clouds, and no telling how high flood will rise afore mornin’. Where’s Esau?” He holloed again and again, but no Esau was to be seen, and no answer came to his repeated calls. “An old rascal! he’s stopped at the Lone Tree and been overtaken, I’ll be bound, and we in such straits, wi’ scarce a mossel o’ coal left i’ the house,” he muttered.

“Maybe father couldna get through the ford wi’ watter risin’ this fashion,” said the carter’s boy, a bright, open-faced, pleasant-looking lad about twelve years old, but small of his age. “He’ll be here d’rectly, surely,” he added, anxiously contradicting himself, as he watched the bit of lonely road which was in sight over the low rise, but his tone was not a hopeful one.

Gilbert did not answer, but splashing ankle-deep across the yard he opened a stable door with some difficulty, for it stood several inches in the water, took down a couple of halters, and led out the two remaining raw-boned, gaunt-looking, grey cart-houses, one after the other.

“Come here, thou little chap,” said he; and taking the boy by the legs he lifted him up high enough to enable him to scramble on to the neck of one of the great ungainly beasts. “See, thee mun tramp off wi’ em to Farmer Booth’s up at Ashtree Hill. He telled me he’d tak’ horses in to-night if we was driv hard wi’ the watter. A pretty fellow thee feyther is for to leave his work to a little chap like thee, and him knowing how all is exact, and gone sin’ nine o’clock this mornin’, and how we should be put to it to send off the nags and fettle the beasts and a’!”

The boy disappeared in the thick, foggy air, riding one of his charges and leading the other, looking like a fly on an elephant; but the despised agricultural laborer is shrewd enough to do his own work well, he has an instinct for horses

from his earliest years, and can be trusted to guide and care for them at an age when he looks hardly able to do more than see to himself. The big beasts plashed noisily through the flood, flinging the water round their rough heels as though they rather enjoyed it, and Gilbert stood for a moment looking after them and their boy rider, and then turned into the rick-yard, where his brother was cutting locks of hay out of the drenched rick, to carry to some wretched cows who were starving on a higher bit of ground, now an island in the lake, which had once been the meadow by the river.

"If it's to go on like this, what air we to do? and a' that nice hay as we should ha' sold just cuttin' up to keep them beasts alive as canna get their own livin' off the land under water! It's just ruin starin' us i' th' face," said George, when, having "suppered up" the cows, the two brothers walked drearily into the old farmhouse kitchen. The floor was scarcely now above the level of the flood, and so muddy with the wet which was oozing in, that a coal from the low fire on the hearth hissed, when it fell onto the uneven brick pavement, as if into a pool.

Gilbert thrust his hands deep into his pockets in silence, but he groaned inwardly as he stood looking at the dull grate. There was more dependent for him than for his brother on the success of the farm. They had both embarked all their small capital in it after the death of their father, knowing but little about farming, and Gilbert had hoped to bring home a wife as soon as their fortunes permitted it. But now in that pocket lay a letter he had just received from the father of his lady-love, a thriving tradesman, somewhat close-fisted, belonging to a little town some twenty miles distant, which was to break off the engagement. "It did not seem likely," Mr. Clowes wrote, "that Mr. Gilbert would be able to win through such a season; he was in debt already, and Mr. Clowes did not choose that his Rosy, brought up as she had been to all sorts of comfort, should risk such ways; besides, the Low Lees was a dairy farm, and she'd always said as how she wouldn't marry into butter, petticklar after what Mr. Gilbert had said to her, Tuesday was a sennit." Gilbert had had a sharp quarrel with Rosy the last time they had met; he had been very angry at her open flirtation with a linen-draper rival, "in a very genteel way" as was perpetually thrown in his teeth by her relations, and she had been exceed-

ingly cool in her replies to his invectives. The consciousness of the state of his affairs had made him sharper perhaps than he quite knew, and not a little touchy as to any sign of a desire to throw him overboard.

"Sam's my cousin only twice removed!" said Rosy at last, angrily, "and I'll talk to him as long as ever I've a mind to. And if you're for to come down on me like that there, afore you're my master, pretty times there'd be when you is! So we'd best have done wi' it now while there's time, Mr. Gilbert; that's what I seem to think!"

He had replied angrily, and they had parted with no softening on either side. Old Clowes's letter was only what he felt he might have expected, but it was none the less bitter for that.

"Rosy's got her way in it," thought he: "them girls is all alike—very pretty in the sunshine, and as sweet as honey when all's on the smooth; but they can't stand storm nor wintry weather. 'No, thank you, sir,' says they; 'them's not my bargains!'"

His dismal reverie was interrupted by his brother, who dropped into the settle in the great old chimney-corner with a grim laugh. "I tell 'ee what, the weather's enow to wash the very heart out of a man, that's what it is; we canna put ought intil the land wi' the ground so sodden, and it stands to reason we shanna get nought out o' it, and rent and taxes and livin' and a' to come with crops that ain't to be had, and that's a pretty look-out! I say, Molly, you'd best make haste. I be half clemmed, and wet up to th' knees all day like. Don't ye set it out there, girl!" he called to a slatternly maid, who began to serve up some exceedingly ill-cooked bacon and greens on the three-legged round table without a table-cloth, flanking it with a hard lump of cheese and harder bread.

Gilbert stood looking at the unsavory mess with much distaste, while his hungry brother disposed of a large plateful.

"If ye donna eat, ye canna work, man; so ye'd best set to," said George, at length, with his mouth full.

"Haven't ye got a sup o' milk?" inquired Gilbert of the red-haired, heavy-handed Molly.

"The milk's all gone sour, and the cows didn't give scarce none, and it's been all took up for the butter," replied Molly ungraciously. Any contradictory reasons did for "Mr. Gilbert" in her opinion.

"Things wouldn't ha' been so wretched

if I'd got Rosy here," thought Gilbert to himself. "But it ain't just the sort o' place for to bring her to, as has been used to all conveniences, that's certain! Her father and she's in the right, maybe, to break it off; it's common sense, everybody 'll tell 'em so, let alone that Sam!" and he put the last spoonful of the tea left in the tea-chest into the half-tepid water supplied by Molly, and stirred it savagely. "Can't ye gie me even a sup o' hot watter? and biling it in the skillet too!"* said he.

"Kittle's broke, and there's scarce no coal not left, and Esau not come back wi' none fresh, and gone this six hours," she pronounced sententiously.

"I mun be off and look arter that ne'er-do-weel, or we shall lose the nag and cart and coal altogether," said Gilbert, starting up, after swallowing his tea. "Maybe he's stuck at the ford, as the boy says. I canna be wetter nor I am, that's one comfort," he went on, laughing drearily, as he glanced at his muddy coat, his leggings soaked up to the thighs. Anything, however, was better than sitting still, brooding over his woes, and the helpless condition of the farm before the subtle enemy which was hemming them in on all sides, and gradually, as he said himself, "choking them off the place."

He reached the top of the little rise, and strained his eyes out into the deepening November mists, but there was nothing in sight along the half-submerged road. Far and wide as his eyes could reach, stretched the plain of water, like an inland sea, for miles. The reflections of the trees sunk "up to their knees" in the flood, fell long and black on the trembling surface of the waste of waters, broken here and there by little islands of dry land, once the upper part of the meadows, where the melancholy-looking cows and sheep had taken refuge, or isolating a cottage from all communication with the outer world except by wading over ankle-deep. It had ceased raining for the moment, but a few long, angry, red streaks in the horizon seemed only to make the greys and blacks look colder and bleaker in the landscape. He plodded on a couple of miles to a much dreaded ford, where the rush of the water was always dangerous when its depth concealed the landmarks of the road. Besides which, there was known to be a deep hole in the bed of the stream, a little below, where a

couple of Cromwell's troopers were traditionally said to have been drowned, and a man and horse had been lost in somewhat later days. Twenty years ago there was seldom a bridge to be found where a ford existed. Still no cart and no Esau were too be seen.

"As lief go forwards as backwards," said Gilbert disconsolately, as he prepared to cross the long "stick bridge," now submerged at both ends, for ten or twenty yards, so that he had to wade into quite deep water before he could reach the treacherous, worm-eaten, slimy planks, supported by frail posts, which constituted the passage, and now shook in the rapid flow of the water. An empty, horseless wagon stood on the further edge, half in the river, which had been evidently abandoned till easier times by the owner, who had ridden away with the horses; otherwise Gilbert met scarcely anything or body as he plashed on. At length he reached a small town, built, with strange perversity, chiefly at the bottom of the hill, close to the water, instead of on the higher, safer ground above. A stream was now running rapidly through the lower streets, and a small boat was punting from house to house. The coal-yard, and a "public," where the delinquent Esau was probably to be found, lay at the further side of the town end, and Gilbert shouted to the boatman: "Gie us a cast; I want to get to the wharf."

"The stream do run most uncommon hard to-night," answered the man, bringing his rickety little craft as near as he could to the bank. As the boat passed on, Gilbert could look into the disconsolate dwellings where the oozy slime was swaying in and out of the doorways. "Folks has a took to the upper stories this week past, cooking and sleeping and a', and a precious tight fit for most on 'em too, with scarce a grate up-stairs in some o' th' houses," said the boatman, as he deposited his fare on an open green space, with houses set at all sorts of angles, near a brook which ran down the middle to join the river below, and, overflowing, seemed intent on doing as much mischief as its small powers admitted.

"I'll first go up and see if Mrs. Seddon have a heerd anythink of the Clowes afore I go forward; maybe she may know summat," said Gilbert to himself, stopping before a very old, half-timbered house, on a green slope close to the river, standing alone among some shabby laurels and rather untidy sheds. He rapped at the door, which was opened by a very

* Let housewives make a skillet of my helm.

Othello.

pretty girl, dressed with more flounces and furbelows than quite suited the weather or the dwelling. With rather an affected, lively, conscious manner, she began, "What! Mr. Gilbert, who'd ha' thought o' seeing you to-day?"

"Rosy!" cried he, in great amaze, "what, are *you* here?"

"And why not?" answered she, bridling and mincing as she walked before him into an empty, stone-flagged parlor on the left of the passage, very scantily furnished.

"I didn't know you was in town, that's all," said he gloomily, as he paused at the door, and looked down at his own muddy condition. "I ayn't fit for to come in nowheres. I'm too dirty and too dripping for such fine folk;" and he looked at her smartness half admiringly and half angrily. "And I'm fit for nothing neither,—that's what it is; I'm well nigh heartbroke," he added, almost fiercely. "We shanna overget such a run o' ill luck as this, not by no means, and yer father's quite right, no doubt, when he's wrote to say he won't gie ye to a ruined man. So what's the use o' my comin in, after all as has been said and done?"

"You're most wonderful ready for to take his word for it and be off, *to be sure*," answered the girl, kindling, and losing her affected manner; "you might ha' waited till so be I'd spoke myself and set ye free, I take it! I wants to keep no man on as doesn't want to keep me, I'd let you know that, Mr. Gilbert! And so that little matter's settled, and now ye may go as soon as ye please, and sooner too!" she ended angrily, her color rising, and her bright eyes sparkling with annoyance.

He looked at her for a moment with a serious, passionate affection, which would have moved her deeply at another time; but she was vexed and hurt, and intent on not showing any superfluous emotion on her own side, and refused to see the feeling on his.

She had come to the little town on purpose to try and see Gilbert, and tell him she should hold to her word in spite of her father's prohibition, and her own flights of naughtiness and temper in the past. She had rehearsed the whole scene within herself—what he would say about Sam Churchill, how he would look, and above all, how *she* should look, and how she should end by making an amends, without at all acknowledging that she had been in the wrong—a feat in which some women excel. But realities are hardly

ever like these pretty fancy pictures; and now, instead of the tender meeting she had promised herself, he beseeching and entreating, and declaring that he could not live without her, and she coyly yielding after much and tender pressure, he was accepting his dismissal as a matter of course, submitting far too philosophically, she thought, to the fiat of the authorities, taking for granted that all was over between them, instead of begging and praying for mercy, as she was "sure Sam would ha' done." It was too provoking, and she could have cried with vexation.

"Gie us a good word at parting, Rosy, won't ye? who knows when we shall meet again? Shake hands wi' me, if it's the last time," said poor Gilbert entreatingly, as he stood with the handle of the door in his hand before going out again, sorrowfully and unwillingly, into the dank evening. But she was too indignant to hear the tone; the real feeling within her made her only more intent upon showing (but too successfully) that she "did not mind," as she turned away from him without speaking.

If he didn't care for her more than *that*, she wasn't going to break her heart for him. "*J'en aurai du regret, mais je n'en mourrai pas*," as the old French song has it. There were as good fish and better in the sea, everybody said, and no lack of suitors for one like her. And, having almost slammed the house door after him, she threw herself down on the old, hardhearted horsehair sofa and cried as if her heart would break, crumpling all the little bobs and bows which (in this instance at least) she had put on in the innocent coquetry of wishing to look her prettiest in his sight. It was a pity that Gilbert could not have looked back and seen what was going on inside the house, but if he had returned she would only have received him more coldly than ever. "I hate him, that's what I do!" she repeated to herself, with unnecessary vehemence, as she bit her lips. "Why did he fault my gown and all, too? A nasty, cold-hearted chap, as isn't worth my giving a tear for!" but she cried on all the same.

Presently she heard a heavy footfall in the flagged passage and started up, smoothing her ruffled locks and dainty arrangements, as the mistress of the house, a large, unwieldy woman, whose speech was as slow and deliberate as her actions, came into the room.

"I thought as I heerd Gilbert Sherard's

voice. Is he gone so quick as all that? I were just a-going for to ax him for to stop and have summat to eat. What on airth is he gone for like a runaway horse?" said Mrs. Seddon.

"He hadn't time not to stay," said Rosy shortly, with a very good show of indifference.

"He's enow to do, that's certain sure, with the weather so tickle,* and farming work where 'tis, without going neighboring; only what for then did he come in here at all, and not so much as ax for me?" observed Mrs. Seddon phlegmatically. "So now you'd best come in to your tea; the pikelets is a gettin' cold."

They had not long sat down when, ruminating slowly, after her fashion, as she helped the girl to the indigestible buttered cake, Mrs. Seddon went on, "I thowt ye telled me ye wanted to see Gilbert? Why, ye hadn't time not to say nothink! How were it he didn't stop a bit, and he come so far, and so wet as it is to-night?"

Rosy gulped down her tears and her tea together, as she repeated mechanically, "He were after something somewhere, and it's so late that he couldn't stop no longer."

"In my young days it weren't never too late for a young man as were after courting a young girl for to stop a bit, and he'd a squeedged ten minutes out o' the hardest day's work ever mortal man had a knowed, for to see her. There's more nor that underneath it, Rosy, so don't you tell me."

But Rosy was quite silent.

"You've a got yerself into a scrape, Rosy, my lass, I can see that," went on Mrs. Seddon, spearing another triangle of muffin on to her two-pronged fork. "I've a heerd o' yer goings on wi' that there Sam Churchill, what isn't fit to hold a candle to Gilbert, no not if the one hadn't a penny, and the other t'other were just sewn up wi' gold! I've a knowed him, that's Gilbert, man and boy, this nigh six-and-twenty years, and that's about sin he were in arms, and there ayn't a better bit o' man's flesh goes upo' two legs, and his mother and father afore him too; it's a good stock, and I thinks a deal o' what stock a chap comes on. And there you and that precious father o' yours together has a flung him overboard, I hear tell, when he's sad, and sinking, and solitary; and if I'd knowed as much as I do now o' yer goings on, when you

had a wrote for to say you was coming, I'd not ha' let you show your face in my house, to play wi' an honest man's heart, as if ye were a kitten wi' a ball; I can tell ye that," ended Mrs. Seddon, with an indignation which was not the less but the more weighty for being long in arriving.

By this time Rosy was sobbing without any restraint, her heart was opened, she was very unhappy, and she would have been glad of her cousin's help and sympathy in her perplexities. She might have acknowledged her wrong, and got Mrs. Seddon's help in setting it straight; but there was no knowing what the "mights" and the "coulds" would have brought about, for the door opened and Mr. Seddon himself came in, followed by a young man. The corn-chandler was a comfortable, smug little man, with a great tendency to small jokes; and Rosy, heartily disinclined to have her causes of agitation discussed and her tears commented on by him, started up and began busying herself about tea-cups in a dim corner of the large, low room.

"I've a brought Mr. Sam's brother in to tea, missis," said old Seddon, with a chuckle, feeling that he had done a very smart thing. His wife could have bitten him,—slowly, as was her wont, but none the less sharply. "And I'm not sure as Mr. Sam's not to the fore himself afore evening's out, and what'll ye say to that, I wonder?" he went on exultingly.

Rosy was in a very penitent mood; but at that period of her life it was quite out of her power not to smile and make herself agreeable to any young man; and though Mr. Sam's brother was at that moment as unwelcome to her as any one of the male species could be, she was soon laughing and talking with him, apparently as cheerfully as ever she had done.

Mrs. Seddon was extremely annoyed. She looked on with a face glum with disgust, and preserved almost unbroken silence when Sam Churchill joined the party.

But the graver she grew the more Rosy's spirit of opposition rose, and the more vigorously she flouted. She laughed loudly at Sam's bad jokes, capped his stories, answered his banter. Old Seddon, delighted at the success of his evening, and greatly amused with the change from his wife's heavy, sensible discourse, encouraged the fun, and aided and abetted all the nonsense that was flying about his little hot parlor.

* And makes me loathe this state of life so tickle.
SPENSER'S *Fairy Queen*.

Mrs. Seddon disdained to interfere further. "Why, she hasn't as much heart as would serve a sparra," thought she to herself, as she sat and knitted her wrath into a long blue worsted stocking. "What a fool Gilbert is to waste his on such a cockalorum jig as she, with a' her bobs, and flounces, and curls! and that takes arter her mother as she do! And I'm a fool for my pains to care what Sally Brown's darter do do; they're both cut off the same joint and cooked wi' the same sauce. As she's brewed so mun she bake, and I wash my hands o' the girl."

At last the two young men rose to go, Sam making a plunge at a rose, which the girl had put into her dress with a very different intention — thinking of Gilbert, indeed, as she picked and fixed it, and now letting his rival carry off the prize.

"Come back again to-morrow if ye can, and we'll have some more fun," shouted old Seddon, as he followed them out.

"Rosy," said Mrs. Seddon, as the girl came back from a whispered adieu at the door. "I understood ye to tell me ye wanted to come here for to speak to Gilbert Sherard, as had took ill summat as had happened betwixt and between ye, and to make it up. I niver thowt to live to see one of my own kin, yer mother's child, carrying on like that there, wi' two on them chaps at once! Me and she were sisters' children, and right fond I were of my aunt, yer grandmother, and I won't have not any such doings where I am!"

"You're no call to speak to me like that! faulting and scolding me so unkind!" cried Rosy hotly. "You're not my mother anyhow. You're on'y my cousin."

"Thank heaven, no I ayn't," answered Mrs. Seddon in a heartfelt tone, which was anything but complimentary, and galled the spoiled little beauty to the quick; "but whether or no I haven't the right to set my lady straight, as bein' only her cousin, this is my house, and such goings on as yourn sha'n't be under my roof-tree, not by nobody; so there, you may make yer own accounts o' that!"

Rosy pouted, but her excitement was over, the better spirit was beginning to return; she turned away, with the tears clinging to her long black eyelashes, and looked very pretty and very penitent, in a way which was generally quite successful in disarming wrath; but Mrs. Seddon, in a hardened tone, went on quite unmoved by "beauty's spell," —

"Did ye appint them two young chaps here or no? tell me that."

"I can't prevent any young men from coming anywhere they've a mind to. How can I?" answered Rosy mutinously.

"I axed ye whether ye telled 'em yer was coming here to-day?" persisted her uncompromising hostess.

"They knowed it somehow, I b'lieve," admitted the girl unwillingly.

Mrs. Seddon marched out of the room without a word more.

"Oh, don't, cousin Seddon!" cried Rosy, following her and taking hold vehemently of her arm. "I know I've behaved very bad, but ye munna throw me off like that! there's none to help me only you. They laugh at home when I'm sarcy and flighty, and think as it's smart and rather grand-like to have a lot on 'em trailin' arter me; but I *do* care for Gilbert, oh, no end o' times more nor that Sam! And you'll be good to me, won't ye? and help me to be good, dear!" and she flung her arms tenderly round the old woman's neck.

There was no resisting the passionate appeal. Mrs. Seddon suffered herself to be led into the back parlor, and smoothed her ruffled brow while Rosy poured forth her doubts, and her difficulties, and troubles, sitting on a low stool, with the firelight playing on her dark eyes and heightening the color on her cheeks. Her upturned face looked very bewitching in her earnest mood, as the old woman could not help acknowledging to herself, at first with a somewhat unwilling smile, till at last she was won over to bestow a kiss on the brown head which had been laid on her knees, and with it some excellent advice, which her wayward little cousin took with unwonted meekness, the "edges of the medicine cup" having been sweetened according to Tasso's receipt.

CHAPTER II.

THE OLD HOUSE IN THE FRESHET.

GILBERT passed on with angry strides until he reached the farther end of the little town, where, near the coal wharf by the canal, he found his horse and cart, laden and ready to start, standing in the cold and rain, waiting dismally before the door of the public-house where their driver had been carousing for the last few hours. The horse pricked up his ears as its master approached. "If it isn't enow to make a dog ashamed," said he fiercely, to the ostler who stood lounging by with a straw in his mouth. "You just tell

that Esau I've come and took the horse and cart away, and he may stop now till midnight if he pleases, for he sha'n't come back to the Low Lees not so long as he've breath in his body, that I promise him, a lazy, drunken rascal!" And he drove off at a more rapid rate than quite suited either his steed or his load. As he passed the turn to the Seddons' he saw Sam Churchill walking up to the house. "Eh, no wonder she were in such a hurry to get rid o' me," thought he bitterly; "she were expecting that young chap for to court her here, and that's what she come for to Knowlton, no doubt, and I were fool enow to think maybe she'd chose it for to speak to me again!" It seemed hard that she should have come into his very neighborhood to throw this additional bitter drop into his already full cup, and he drove home in the very gall of bitterness.

The next day there was but little improvement in the weather; the rain had gone on all night, and it was not possible to trace the course of the river lower down the valley; the lake stretched far and wide, and what cattle had not been removed to the higher ground in proper time had been drowned all along the banks — as they heard.

Gilbert had been hard at such work as could be done on the farm, when about two in the afternoon the postman reached Low Lees, having had to make a great circuit to deliver his budget at all. He put a solicitor's letter into George's hands, which the brothers had been expecting sadly for several days.

"Hopkins wunna wait; they say they'll put in a distress. Thee mun go over to Knowlton and see whether there's aught to be done, and there's Farmer Grimsby talked as how he'd offer for the grey mare; what's the use o' keepin' o' her, eating off her head, and we mun grab now at any money we can get to live. Tak' her to him and see."

"Why don't you go, yoursen, George?" answered Gilbert wearily; "it's your turn to-day, sure'y."

"Because you're a better hand at a bargain; and I don't like facing them lawyers, and that's a fact. Thee long legs 'ull mak' nothing o' the walk," replied George, laughing sheepishly and looking at his brother's tall, well-set figure and athletic limbs, very unlike his own squat, thick person.

It was a bitter pill to Gilbert to return to Knowlton in his present circumstances; but in such a sea of troubles as his, "what

did an additional drop signify?" thought he, as he prepared for his journey. He was always the willing horse, on whose shoulders all men (that could) placed their burdens.

Esau had kept carefully out of his master's way until now, doing odd jobs; but it was of no use delaying longer, and he came up to Gilbert, as he was starting, with a petition for forgiveness.

"We can't kip ye a day longer," answered he angrily; "we've forgiv' ye twice a'ready; nothing safe wi' ye, and I'd rather do the carterin' mysen than ha' such doings as yourn. The little un's worth ten o' ye. I'll pay ye to th' end o' th' week, so be gone wi' ye."

Esau sneaked out of the room with the money in his hand, and the first thought in his mind was how much good drink was contained in it, if he could but reach the Lone Tree without going home. How could he do better with his earnings than take his pleasure speedily, before they were "frittered away" in necessities for all those hungry mouths that awaited them? He hurried on as fast as he could to the public-house, and was soon stretching out his legs before its fire, drinking his beer, and "thinking o' nothin' at a'" — the acme of bliss to one of his species, the utterly selfish, who are not troubled by remorse of any kind for their misdeeds.

Meantime Gilbert had ridden the great rough grey mare by the upper longer road to Farmer Grimsby's and left it there on trial, after which he pursued his way on foot to Knowlton. There was a painful look of black care on his handsome face, which had grown thin and worn in the last year; lines of sadness were eating into it with the constant anxieties gnawing at his heart, as he felt how all his chances of happiness, his fortune, his hopes, were melting away in that muddy yeast of waves that was closing in around him.

As he neared the town, the flood grew narrower, but also stronger. The people looked blanker than even the day before.

"Why it's risen four feet sin' yesterday marnin'! What will us come to if it dunna stop? Them folks in the upper chambers will be downright clemmed wi' cold, and fever 'll break out wi' all that slime and dirt running in and out," said one man after another to him as he passed up the dull little street. He did not stop, however, but went on, scarcely turning his head right or left; he did not want to see or to be seen. But when he reached the solicitor's office the chief was

out, sent for in a hurry to make a will, and the young client found little comfort from the second in command.

"You must pay, Sherard, there's no help for it. You can't hold on. I'm sorry for you, you're an honest man; but you hadn't capital enough, and you've let the land get the master of you, instead of being master of the land, that's where it is!"

It might be very true, but was not consolatory, and he came out of the door even more down-hearted than he went in. The wind was rising as he passed down the little street, and the gusts beat in his face, but it was not raining. He went on, full of his own troubles, and scarcely looking about him till he came in sight of the broken ground above the river; there was a distant roar of water louder than the wind and the storm, and it was coming nearer and nearer.

"The walls and hedges above town has been holding back the flood like a dam, and simmingly they've giv' way and bursted at last," said a passer-by. "Heaven help the houses by Dollonds' and Seddons'!"

"Seddons'!" cried Gilbert, rushing down the lane which led to the open green, where, on the low ground between the stream and the river, stood the old timbered house. The sun was near setting, but there was a full moon, and, though her face could not be seen, her light shone through the great clouds which were drifting furiously across the sky, and it was not dark. The additional rush of water was driving all before it; branches of trees, planks, thatch, and broken palings, torn up by its force in the upper valley, were whirling along in the current, threatening everything that came in their way. It had now surrounded the Seddons' old house, which was tottering under the tremendous force of the wave of water now fast undermining the foundations. There was not a moment to be lost; he could see the women at the upper windows waving their handkerchiefs for help, which there seemed to be no one to give. He ran back to the main road beyond, where the boat was still plying; it had just landed from a cruise. "You must come off directly," said Gilbert, jumping in, "there's Seddons drowned out!"

"I won't go to no such a place," said the man; "the boat can't live in them currents, and no end of broken spars and walls all round it."

"Currents or no currents, you'll have to

come," muttered Gilbert, as he seized an oar and pushed off.

"You'll pay me well, else you shanna stir," said the man, hanging back in a way to prevent the boat's progress; "how much will ye gie for the job?"

"Seddons' a rich man, you're quite safe," cried Gilbert. "Mind that there bit o' tree round the corner!"

It was a dangerous and difficult bit of navigation; the whirlpools caused by the cross flow from the little stream, and the tremendous rush of the flood, made steering almost impossible among the unknown perils below the water, on which the crazy boat risked each moment to be wrecked. She grounded on the broken end of a wall in a way which threatened to break through her bottom at one instant, and was nearly impaled by a sharp bit of wooden fencing, which was only just under the muddy waves, at the next. At length they were reached by the swirl of the main stream, and were almost whirled away by the eddies and the rapids. By dint of some of the hardest work Gilbert had ever done in his life, they forced the boat across, and up to the Seddons' house. The water now reached above the lower windows, but there was still a great space to the sills of the upper ones, and these were very small, while Mrs. Seddon was very large and unwieldy. "How ever will she get through?" Gilbert had time to think within himself; but to his relief he saw that they were forcing out the rickety old casements bodily, which luckily did not resist. He could see Rosy at work as they fell with a splash into the current. Mrs. Seddon had a head on her shoulders; but when it came to climbing on the narrow sill, and dropping down into the boat far below, her courage failed. "I canna do it, I'm too heavy; you'll both be drowned, waiting for me; get you down and leave me," she repeated to Rosy and the maid, amidst shouts from the two men of "Make haste, make haste, we canna hold on much longer!"

"Nonsense! Here, Lizzie, heave her up t'other side," cried the girl, as they lifted her up on the window with might and main. "It's *you* must make haste; you'll drown us both if you don't. Nothing shall make me stir till you're out, so help me God!"

It was a hard task. Mrs. Seddon was so helpless and so heavy, that though the two girls above held on with all their strength to a shawl round her waist, and Gilbert bore up her weight from below, as far as his shifting standing would allow,

the boat almost foundered with the shock of her descent. Rosy followed lightly and quickly.

"And me!" screamed the poor maid; "you're not a-going to leave me behind like this here! Wait, oh wait!"

"The boat's full. I'll be back directly they're landed—I swear it," shouted Gilbert in return.

The freight was indeed a dangerous one; the water reached to the gunwales, and, though the shore was not above thirty yards off, the boat nearly sunk before it could touch dry land. There were plenty of people there, however, ready to drag Mrs. Seddon over the floating rubbish on to the edge, where her fat little husband was running up and down, looking like a drenched hen, wringing his hands, and doing absolutely nothing for the relief of his household. Rosy sprang out after her cousin, much too agitated to speak to Gilbert, even if there had been a moment, before he was off again to the rescue of poor Lizzie, whose cries could be heard even in the uproar.

It was almost a more difficult matter to get at the maid than it had been at the mistress; the boat had drifted with its heavy charge, and they had now to row up-stream; the house was beginning to settle into the water, and it was dangerous to approach it on the near side, while the other was beset with outhouses, between which they dangerously swerved. "Get out on the roof!" shouted Gilbert to the frightened girl, who came slipping and sliding on the broken slates, and fell before she could reach the end of the gable. There she hung struggling to the end of a beam. "Leave go; drop in!" cried Gilbert, but in vain, though it was a fall of not more than three or four feet; it was impossible to make her understand, and it was not till the strength of her arms gave way and she fell into the boat with a blow which almost sank it, that they could get her off.

At the top of a high wall alongside was a wretched little dog, forgotten in the yard next door, who had broken his chain in the hubbub, and now ran backwards and forwards, howling miserably as he looked at the rushing currents; his entreaties for help were as distinct as if he could have put them in words, and Gilbert could not withstand their eloquence; he turned the head of the boat.

"I'll tell ye it's murder and a rascally shame to go back for the like o' he!" shouted the boatman, pulling the other way; but the beast had caught his chance

of help in Gilbert's motion, made his leap, and scrambled in during the half-second of chance in spite of the bit of hanging chain, with the help of a friendly oar.

The currents were perpetually changing, and it was now impossible for them to return to the same side as before; they therefore drifted with the stream to the farther shore, and landed at some distance below. It was a long way round by the upper bridge to the place where he had left the Seddons; for a moment, however, Gilbert had half a mind to return with the girl. "Nay, but I wunna go back just to be thanked," muttered he, and his pride came to the front. "If she cared for that Sam no longer ago nor yesterday, 'twould be a poor look-out for me if she took to *me* to-day because I boated her across a ditch!" he thought stoutly.

"You'll remember me to them all," said he to Lizzie, who was beginning to recover her senses and start on her road home.

"But you'll come home and be dried, and eat summat, arter all you've been and done for us?" inquired she anxiously.

"There's not much 'home' left," answered Gilbert, pointing over the water to the old house which was gradually sinking before their eyes, slowly breaking up piecemeal; the rush of the water was subsiding and the flood going down to its previous limits, but too late to save the Seddons' home. "No, I canna come; ye mun tell 'em it's too late, and I'm too soaked," he said resolutely; "and I'm gone home, and hopes they'll none on them be the worse of their wetting."

"And my money?" inquired the man angrily. "You haven't paid me nothing."

"I haven't got none," replied Gilbert, a little sadly; "but you'll be no loser. Lizzie, you tell Mrs. Seddon from me as I promised him twelve shillings, and she mun add some more for the saving of you, and of the dog too," he added, stooping to stroke the wet beast's head, who rubbed its dirty sides gratefully and affectionately against his leg. "Good-bye, Lizzie; shake hands."

"It wasn't him a bit as saved my life; 'twas you," cried the girl; then, as she watched him striding off up the hill, "Him's a good un both to man and beast; that's what he is!" she added, enthusiastically, if not grammatically.

"He's got a strong arm as ever I come across," observed the man; "he a'most lifted the boat out of the water when he rowed. But I don't hold wi' caring a'

that lot about dumb beasts! he well nigh drowned us a' wi' taking in that dog; and where'd ever ha' been the reason in that, I'd like to know."

Gilbert walked away at a great pace along the muddy roads. The excitement of the rescue had stirred his blood; he was no longer the down-trodden man he had felt before; he had not had so light a heart for months; he had been doing work that was worth doing; and to endure passively, as had been his doom now for so long, is always more difficult to a man than action however hard. Even his affairs did not seem so hopeless as a few hours back. If he and his brother were ruined, why they must begin again from the bottom; he was young and strong and with no one hanging upon him for support. There was a dim feeling, too, in his mind that at all events he had shown his manhood to his lady-love, he had risked his life for others, and if she chose to marry his rival, it was hardly because he was the better man—which was exhilarating, at least for the time.

He was pursuing his way by the upper longer road, knowing that the ford would be deeper and more unsafe even than usual, when, just as he had passed the lane which led to it, he suddenly heard a piercing cry in the distance, sharp and painful, evidently in the direction of the stick bridge; he turned and set off running at his utmost speed, shouting as he went to summon help, but nothing living was within sight or hearing. When he reached the turbid, dark stream, he thought in the dull twilight he could see something struggling in the dim beyond. "I'm coming, I'm coming!" he halloed as he made his way slowly forward, first through the water which was nearly up to his middle, and then on to the slippery planks of the bridge upon which he climbed with much ado. He stood still on the highest point and looked around, but there was nothing to be seen. He called again and again, but there was no answer; and the clouds which were sweeping at railway speed across the sky at a great height above him so obscured the light of the moon, that for the moment he could see but a little way before him.

Meantime the boy Roger had hurried home as soon as his work was over, knowing that his mother would sorely need all comfort possible after her husband's dismissal.

"He's off to the Lone Tree," sobbed the poor woman. "I seen him pass, as

he thowt unbeknownst. Go arter him, my boy, and strive if ye canna save a bit o' money to keep us from clemming! How ever is us to get through, wi' nowt coming in but thy little bit o' wage? God bless thee!"

The lad trudged on, tired as he was, with all his might, to the little public. The Lone Tree was now surrounded by fields and old hedgerow timber, but the name must have come down from the time when the hillside was an open, unenclosed, treeless common, a sign of the old-world story often attached to such primitive houses of shelter. Esau had found the settle by the ingle fire pleasant and cheerful in the wet evening, and had comfortably forgotten wife and children and all his troubles, when suddenly his face lengthened, for the door opened, he looked up, and in came Roger, out of breath and his face in a glow from having run so far and so fast.

"Daddy," he panted, "the pig have a got in th' watter, and he'll be drowned, if ye donna come quick, and he sich a toertly young un." He had imagined this device on the road, knowing that no moral levers could be brought to bear on his father's hardened selfishness.

"'Tis very hard!" growled Esau; "and me that niver gets no good out o' my life not at a'. What do th' pig mind? As if ye couldna sort him yersen! and the weather so cazely, and the wind so whiffle, for to worrit me like this here; 'tis a good risin' I should gie thee, and no mistake, 'ithstead o' hearkening to thy jaw."

At last, however, like the unjust judge, worn out with his son's insistence—for Roger had a will as well as his father—"to get shut o' the lad, he went with him," as he said.

"We mun go by the upper road," cried the lad anxiously, as his father turned down towards the ford.

"'Tis the nighest way, and we'll go yonder, or we wonna go at all," replied Esau, with drunken perversity. It was no use to struggle with him, and they trudged on.

"It isn't not to say dark, and for a' it's so mucky the rain's stayed, and that's a marcy, and I tak' it the flood's begun to go down; we'll just stump along," said the boy cheerfully.

When they reached the river, however, the freshet, delayed by the winding of the stream, had not yet subsided, and the rushing water, muddy and troubled, and spreading beyond even its usual landmarks, looked most uninviting; the early

part, however, was shallow, and if they could reach the planks all would be well.

"Ye mun just carry me, daddy; 'twill be mor'n over my head," said little Roger, scrambling on his father's back, who waded stupidly on in a half-awake state through the yeasty waves.

"Mind where ye're going, daddy!" cried the boy anxiously, as Esau slipped heavily over the broken ground beneath them. "Mak' for the planks, right over there! right over there!" he called, as he clung for dear life round his father's neck, who went swaying from side to side, utterly unable to guide his own way in his confusion. His hand was on the first of the uprights of the bridge, however, when, with a violent lurch, he went down almost on his knees; Roger lost his hold, uttering a bitter cry as his head hit the post and went under water. Esau clutched instinctively after the boy, and succeeded in getting his arm round him, while he clung with the other to the post. He then plunged slowly on, holding to the planks and keeping his grip on his son, carrying him like a sheep under his arm, too dazed even to lift the lad's head out of the water or to help him on to the bridge. He struggled on manfully, nevertheless, though the river was still breast-high, reached the other side, and was sitting under an old pollard, in a half stupefied state, with Roger lying across his knees, when Gilbert at length perceived the pair under the shadow.

"Why, Esau, what's ever the matter? Why did na' ye answer? What are ye doing there?" Then, as he stooped over him, "Why the lad's faint or stark, and his face all over slush! I do believe he's drowned right off."

"Nay, he's none dead," repeated the carter dully. "I carried him over all right, but we slipped, him and me, and his head went under. He'll come to fast enow. I kep' fast hold on him, that's what I did; for what could I do better? He's all right."

"Not if ye sit there doing nothing for him," muttered Gilbert angrily, as he took the boy up in his arms and carried him, as fast as he could, to the turnpike house, the nearest dwelling to be found along that lonely road.

They tried every means in their power to revive the little lad, but in vain; he was too far gone, the blow on his head had stunned him, and the water had stifled him, and they could not bring him to.

"A drunken rascal, as is not fit to live, and is too bad to drown!" said the

woman of the house indignantly, looking askance at Esau, who sat by the boy's head, scarcely attempting anything to help those who were doing their utmost for his child, but looking at him and repeating slowly,—

"I kep' hold on him, I did. He's all right."

"And to think that it's him that doos nothink for his family as he can help, as is to be left, and the little un, as is his mother's right hand, and as hur thinks no end on, is to be tuk from her! 'Tis a wonderful world, it is," sighed the woman.

"Eh, my little lad!" added Gilbert, sorrowfully bending over the small body. "And art thou gone so soon before us? 'Tis a scratting world we live in, and no mistake. Maybe God A'mighty's doing the best for thee he could to tak' thee to hissen; but thou'lt be sore missed at home, and I shall want thy pleasant face up and down the farmstead, scores o' times. There's many a man thinks no end of hissen, as might ha' gone and no one trouble arter him, not a tenth part what they'll do for thee, my lad! God bless thee!"

It was a simple funeral dirge, but worth living for.

CHAPTER III.

WATCH NIGHT.

THE flood subsided from that night, but not till it had left the Seddons' home a heap of ruins. The old couple had taken refuge with a friend in the town, where Rosy went with them, at least for a few days. She had been bitterly disappointed when Gilbert did not return to her side after their rescue; she was looking out anxiously for him to make her peace at any price, with her heart all in a glow, when Lizzie appeared alone, and she could have cried aloud with vexation.

"Don't he care no more for me nor that, not even a little bit just to see how we were out of the water, after we'd a bin next door but one to a drowning?" moaned she, under her breath, while she tried to distract her thoughts by busying herself about her poor old cousin, who was much shaken with her adventures; while Lizzie's perpetual allusions to Gilbert's merits, external and moral, his virtues and his stature, the strength of his arm, and the kindness of his courage, with her praises in general of all that he had done for them, were not calculated to comfort Rosy for his loss.

The next day Mrs. Seddon wrote off

her thanks and those of the girl in very fervent terms to Gilbert, begging him earnestly to come over to Knowlton; but nothing could induce him to stir. He had an undefined horror of the fuss and the thanks that awaited him; and that evening and night's work, with the close of little Roger's death, seemed to him almost too near his heart to bear discussion. There were plenty of valid excuses as to the work which was wanted on the farm, with nobody to help, which he made good use of and absolutely refused to stir in spite of his brother's expostulations.

"Here's a letter from the lawyer to say as Uncle Sherard up in Yorkshire has a died sudden," said George one morning. "They haven't so much as axed either on us to the funeral, so I tak' it he haven't remembered the old blood. But we mun write and see; and 'twill maybe kip Hopkins quiet a bit longer, if you'd on'y just run o'er and see him."

"You just go and see for yourself, man, how things stand. I don't believe there's nowt for us but just go on, all way up hill, collar work, till so be we come to an end o' the trouble, or the trouble makes an end o' us," answered Gilbert stoutly.

When George returned at night he was fuller of local news than of business, of which there was little that was new to tell.

"What d'ye think that Sam Churchill were arter the flood night? When he heerd yer was up to the Seddons' he just takes a punt too, for rivalry like; but 'twere up stream, and he couldn't get not a score o' yards, till the boat knocked agin the guide-post, and he clambered up like a frightened hen as couldna neither swim nor fly! They went out to him with a cart, but he wouldn't not dare to come down, and he stuck there better nor two hours."

"A pretty fellow he!" laughed Gilbert. "And what did ye see o' the Seddons?"

"Old Mother Seddon she do run on so about ye, Gilbert, and all that ye done for 'em. Why won't ye go over to her, when she wants so sore for to see ye?"

"So I will, so I will! but I mun bide a bit. I dunna choose not to be patted and petted and muched, and a' for nothink at a'. I did it because I liked it, and I haven't had such a good time I don't know when, as fighting that there boat through the waves and the storm and the broken bits: and d'ye think I'll go over to be stroked like as though I were a pussy cat for such as that? Nay, I'll just let it a' blow over and be done wi', and then I'll go and sit wi' the old 'ooman, for

she's a good old thing, and I wouldn't hurt her not for nothink."

He was true to his word; and for the next six weeks he stuck manfully to the farm and the work through the bad weather, the cold, and the snow. It was tolerably dry, however, and the land looked better than could have been expected after its drowning.

It was the last day of the year when Gilbert was at length forced to go over to the town to settle his business at the lawyer's and the bank, and after that he lingered a little at a friendly cattle-dealer's, at whose house he was always welcome, so that it was late and quite dark when he reached the dull little lodging where the Seddons had taken refuge.

"And so you're come at last," said the old woman, a little grimly. "You've took yer time to it, Gilbert Sherard. Did ye think I wanted for to bite ye, as ye kep' away so long?"

"Yer bark were ever worse nor yer bite, Mother Seddon, as George calls ye," replied he, laughing. "I knows that right well. Yer was ever good to us two, ever sin we were babbies, and 'tisn't likely I should forget ye, but I've been busy no end on the farm."

"Too busy to be thanked anyhow," said the shrewd old woman, smiling. "Well, I allus do believe 'tis the mostest work is done wi' the leastest talk, everywhere."

"We'll let bygones be bygones," interrupted he hastily, reddening. "What does Seddon, or leastways you, intend to do about the old house that's down?"

"Rebuild it, man, as soon as winter softens."

"I hope you'll build it higher up then," put in Gilbert.

"I can't abear this livin' in a street, and starin' out a winder into my neighbors' eyes. And now, too, I haven't a room so much as to put a dog in, and I want ye to stop to th' watch night service, and it's too foggy and too dark to go back arter that. There's a fine new preacher. I'm a Churchwoman mysen, but I did always love the chapel watch night, I did."

"Mrs. Jones have just ha' been offering me a shake-down if so be I'd stop over it," said Gilbert.

"Dooee now, 'twill do ye a mort o' good! 'Tis a troublesome world we're set into, heaven knows, and if there's a bit o' quiet to be got anywhere, sure it isn't for us to gie it the go-by. And you'll come in to supper arter all's over,

and tell me all and about it. I'm too bad for to go mysen to-night. Promise me that you'll come in, Gilbert!" she said, with unusual earnestness; "you'll none be the worse of doing an old woman that pleasure."

"I'd promise a harder thing than that, and willing," answered the young man, smiling. "But I mun be off, and tell Mrs. Jones I'll e'en stop with her to-night, or she'll be giving away my place maybe. I'm right down glad to see ye look so peart."*

It was about eleven o'clock when he went out again, and the people were beginning to stream into the chapel, which looked to him quite full when he entered it, while a preliminary hymn was being sung with much fervor, not to say noise. He slipped into a dark place under the gallery, not wishing to be spoken to by any acquaintance. Presently, to his great surprise, he saw Rosy enter and pass up the middle passage to a front seat. She was more quietly dressed than of old, and her expression and manner, he thought, looked quieter too. She gazed round the chapel a little anxiously, but he shrank behind an iron pillar, and she did not see him.

Presently the service began: a devout prayer, a psalm with much about the shepherds keeping watch by night, supposed to be applicable; and then came a discourse of the highly-spiced character which all those who went to the chapel expected and desired to hear.

"Ready to depart," began the preacher. The year had been a disastrous one, publicly and privately; let each one look to himself; had they learned its lesson? The avenger was at hand; had they repented of their sins? he cried, more earnestly; "of your light thoughts, your foolish actions, your wicked ways! It is the sin of each man, it is the sin of every man, that lies heavy on the land, and the Lord is taking vengeance on us for our misdeeds. Death is at hand!" he almost screamed. "Let us be ready to depart, our feet shod, our loins girded. Ah, but there are some of you say, 'We are not wicked at all, we only like to take our pleasure.' Only our pleasure! getting wrongfully and spending recklessly. Yes, and you weaker ones, that think it no great harm, with your dangles and your bangles, to hunt after men's hearts, what shall it serve you if you

lose your own souls, 'taking your pleasure,' as you think you are doing! Strange pleasure, it will seem, in the great light of eternity! Watch, therefore, lest the vengeance of the Lord be upon you."

Rosy began to feel that she herself, at this point, was the central sinner who was preached at, and all her crimes rose dark before her: her flirtations, her flinging away of Gilbert, her taking up of Sam; and as her iniquities grew blacker in her eyes with the vehemence of the speaker, she sobbed aloud; but so did many more, and she was not remarkable in the assembly. And then came the solemn pause, the silent waiting for the death of the old year, of the time that should never more return, the deep, almost dreadful stillness—the speechlessness of a great, expectant crowd.

Rosy held her breath with awe, while she tried to comfort herself by thinking that at least for six weeks she had not done anything—to speak of—in the way of flirtation; "indeed it's nearly seven weeks I may say!" she went on to herself, counting anxiously up the debit and credit account of her virtuous conduct.

She had, in truth, been very unhappy. If she could but see Gilbert again, she would be so different; she would beg him to forgive her, and she would never do so any more! Only to see him again and explain, was what she prayed for; and if the prayer was not a very spiritual one, it was at least better than praying for what she did not really want, which so many of us do day by day.

The clock struck twelve. The young year that was expected by all to bring such happiness and such goodness as no old year had yet been capable of—the year that was to fulfil all the expectations and crown all the efforts which had fallen so blank and flat in the reign of his predecessors—rushed in. The jubilant psalms that greeted his entrance were sung with enthusiasm, a few more words were spoken, and the audience began to melt away through the open door. Rosy found Gilbert by her side,—she was not surprised, it was only natural, as the first product to be expected of the "glad new year." She looked up into his face with a tearful smile and held out her hand; he drew it within his arm, and laid his other hand upon it, and they pressed their way out through the little crowd with a feeling as if they two were alone in creation.

"Gilbert," whispered she, "won't ye forgie me? I'll be so good wi' ye as never were, and try hard not to flirt wi' nobody;

* A tricksie girlie I wot, as peart as bird.

WAKNER'S *Albion's England*, 1592.

and I'll go wi' ye to the world's end, whatever father may say against it, that I will! he'll give in, I know he will. And if you're to be poor (and you will be *very* poor indeed, Gilbert, sha'n't you?), I'll make very little do, and dress in quite common things. See, I've begun already — only look at my gown — just to try, and because I thought you would like it. And why didn't you come back and see me that day after the flood, Gilbert? it was very cruel of ye; and oh, how I did cry that evening, thinkin' of ye that didn't think o' me, when I saw Lizzie come back all alone! . . . What for don't ye speak to me, Gilbert? You're glad to see me, dear, ayn't you?" cried Rosy, in sudden terror at getting no answer.

"Glad!" said he, bending over her, "I should think I was glad! Only I'm a little bit in a maze still, dear, and there hasn't been much room, has there, yet, Rosy, for to put in a word?" And he pressed the hand which he held fondly, as the open street did not admit of a more lively demonstration for the present.

"Ah, you're laughing at me because I run on so! But you shall see as it isn't only words, but that I do care for ye, Gilbert, wi' all my heart and soul," said she tearfully, as they reached Mrs. Seddon's house.

"And how ever did you turn up here at Knowlton to-night?" inquired Gilbert, as they lingered still outside the door for a few words more together.

"Why, to be sure, because Cousin Seddon she axed me, knowing how I were fretting, and how I didn't know how to compass meetin' ye again, you hard-hearted Gilbert, that wouldn't stir an inch nor nothink not to see me! And she wrote as how couldn't I get a bed here wi' a friend for watch night; for 'twould do me a deal o' good to hear the good things spoke to me i' th' chapel, me that wanted them badly! You know she speaks out, does Cousin Seddon! But it was true too what she wrote, all the same. And then she said she'd do what she could for me when sobe she'd got me here."

"Well!" cried the old woman with a smile, as the pair walked into her little room hand in hand; "so you've come back to supper, Gilbert, as good as yer word! I thowt as maybe ye wouldn't forgit this time; and I thowt too, though ye went out one, ye might come back too! So I'm not unprepared; there's two plates for ye, over and above me and my old man, what's arter all gone out wi' some neighbors to-night, he is. But you'll miss

nothink, nor nobody, that's what ye won't. Not if sobe 'twere her Majesty the queen as had a put off comin' to tea, arter sayin' as 'ow she'd be here, which it's sure I am that she wouldn't do no such a thing — God bless her!" added Mrs. Seddon loyally.

"I've got a good bit o' news to tell ye, Rosy," said Gilbert presently. "There's been an old uncle o' ourn as died up in Yorkshire, the t'other day. We hadn't seen or heerd of him for years, and didn't think nowt about him; but the lawyer telled me this evening as he hears we've a come into summat; 'tayn't a very deal — betwixt three and four hundred pounds — but 'twill pretty nigh set us straight at the Low Lees, for Sir John has been main kind about the rent and offered another farm; that isn't not a dairy one neither, dear, and nigh to Knowlton," he added, smiling. "Or what would ye say if we went off to Canada, and tried a' fresh wi' a new start, Rosy?"

The girl's face fell a little, but she recovered herself. "I'll go wi' ye there too, Gilbert, if ye've certain sure set your mind that way. But it's a long way off out there over the big salt sea and the savages, isn't it?" she said, with a little shiver.

"Nay, lad, thee mustna run off that fashion. I canna spare thee nor her neither. Stay a bit. I'm an auld 'ooman and not long for this world; thou'rt like a son to me, and it shanna be the worse for thee and her if ye stops where I can see yer bonny faces now and then," said Mrs. Seddon, more moved than she liked to show, or, indeed, than she had ever felt before in her life. "'Twould be a poor thing as Gilbert Sherard should ha' risked his life for to drag us three out o' the flood, on'y to be drowned out o' house and land hisself, and his wife too, by it. And that they shanna be, or my name ayn't Sarah Seddon!"

F. P. VERNEY.

From The Contemporary Review.
THE VISTAS OF THE PAST:
THE MOON AND THE EARTH.

MANY of those who follow with interest the teaching of science, but have not leisure to study carefully the methods and principles on which those teachings depend, are inquiring what new views are these according to which the moon was

born of the earth many millions of years ago, and has been retreating ever since from the parent orb; how these views are related to the nebular hypothesis of Laplace; and what bearing they may have on astronomical and geological estimates of past eras in the earth's history. An eloquent lecture by the astronomer royal for Ireland has done much to increase the interest with which these questions are viewed; indeed, it may be doubted whether many who are now inquiring about these matters had heard of them at all, before Dr. Ball brought them before the attention of the audiences to whom his lecture has been addressed.

I propose to sketch—and only to sketch, for the subject is one which would require more than a full number of the *Contemporary Review* for adequate discussion—the ideas resulting from the researches of Mr. George Darwin, noting how they are related to former views respecting the development of the solar system, and how they bear on certain other astronomical and geological theories. At the outset I may remark that I cannot altogether agree with the opinions expressed by Dr. Ball, and to some degree by Mr. Darwin, respecting the manner of the moon's birth; but as to the general theory to which Mr. Darwin's researches have led there seems very little room for doubt or question.

In carrying back our thoughts to the past of the earth, our most trustworthy guide (though we must be careful in following even this guide) is evidence found in the study of processes actually taking place at the present time. For instance, we find that the earth is slowly cooling. We can, therefore, safely go back to a time when she was much hotter than she is at present; and though we may not be able to assume confidently that her temperature was ever so great as to cause every particle of her substance to be vaporized, may infer even that, if other features actually existent seem readily explicable on such an assumption. Again, we find that the earth gathers in every year hundreds of millions of meteoric masses of greater or less weight, down to bodies weighing only a few grains; and we know from the orbits followed by the greater number of these that they belong to systems travelling around the sun on paths of such a nature as to forbid us from believing that they were originally expelled from the earth. Seeing, then, that the earth is gathering in materials from without, though now at a very slow rate, and

seeing further that this process is of necessity one which takes place more and more slowly as time proceeds, we are justified in looking back to a time when it progressed far more quickly than at present, in considering that over the whole intervening period—many millions of years—it has been at work, and finally in inferring that no unimportant part of the earth's present mass has been derived in this way from meteoric aggregation.

Now, among other processes of change that are taking place in the earth and her dependent or associate orb, the moon, are two others, discovered in comparatively recent times, though not quite so recently as some might infer from Dr. Ball's account. About a quarter of a century ago Professor Adams, co-discoverer with Leverrier of the distant Neptune, announced that he had discovered an error in Laplace's discussion of the so-called acceleration of the moon, and that when this error was corrected the acceleration could not be entirely accounted for by the theory of gravitation. It was presently shown by the eminent astronomer Delaunay (not to be confounded for a moment with the Delaunay who has recently insisted on the inferiority of the weaker sex) that this unexplained part of the acceleration of the moon may be explained on the assumption that it is not the moon which is gaining, but the earth which is losing time; in other words, that the great terrestrial clock, the rotating earth, by which we measure time, is not going at a uniform rate, but is gradually losing its rotation spin. Laplace's assertion that the earth's rate of rotation, so far as astronomy can measure, is appreciably constant, was based on his investigation of the moon's so-called acceleration. Supposing that no part of this change remained unexplained, when solar and planetary perturbations of the moon were taken into account, he naturally inferred that the great terrestrial timepiece is keeping most perfect time. Finding, on the contrary, that a part of the acceleration does remain unexplained, we are justified in assuming, as at least a possible interpretation of the excess of acceleration, that our chief timepiece is losing time. Delaunay pointed to the tides as a probable and sufficient cause of this change—the great tidal wave carried, not bodily, but still swayingly, against the direction of rotation, checking the earth's rotation spin slowly but “exceeding surely.”

Next, it was shown that, accompanying this change, there must be a gradual loss

of lunar motion, accompanied by a gradual recession of the moon.*

Elsewhere I may take occasion to describe more at length these two processes of change. Here, for the present, let it suffice to note that astronomy recognizes them as taking place, and that they therefore are among the processes which we may carry back in imagination to a very remote past, that so we may recognize what probably was the initial condition — at any rate, a very early condition — of the orbs in which they are taking place.

Of course it is an obvious thought that if the moon is thus receding now, and has been receding in the past, she will one day part company with the earth altogether, and that she was at one time quite close to the earth, and even a part of the earth's mass. Considering, also, the change in the earth's rotation period, and carrying our thoughts as far back into the vistas of the past for this change as for the other, we see a time when the earth was rotating so fast that its equatorial parts were barely restrained by gravity from yielding to the tremendous resulting centrifugal tendency. A simple calculation shows that if the earth rotated once in about one hour and a third, retaining its shape unchanged (which last it could not do unless very much more rigid than it is), a body at the equator would be absolutely weightless. But a much slower rate of rotation than this would suffice to break off the equatorial regions. If the earth rotated once in about three hours the equator would increase its distance from the polar axis, the centrifugal tendency (the rate of rotation continuing) would be greater and the surface gravity less, and the material of the equatorial surface parts would be separated from the rest of the earth's substance.

Dr. Ball follows Mr. Darwin in talking about this rotation rate — one spin in three hours — as that existing when the moon's mass separated from the earth. If we assume the earth at that stage of her existence to have been, apart from centrifugal effect, of the same volume and mass as at present, her substance possibly liquid, but not in great part vaporous, this estimate would be justified. But it appears to me we must not over-

* This may seem inconsistent with what we said above about the lunar acceleration which astronomers have endeavored to explain. But this acceleration is one of the temporary changes which the moon's motion undergoes. It alternates with a similarly temporary retardation, in periods of great length indeed, but not to be compared with the enormous time-intervals which we are considering.

look the probability that the separation of the moon from the earth took place when a large part of the earth's mass continued vaporous through intensity of heat. If that were so, the earth's volume would then have been much greater than at present, even though her mass may have been, as it probably was, much smaller. What we see now in the giant planets, long after the moon-generating part of their career, seems to confirm this view, which *a priori* reasoning renders probable. We have also to take into account the smaller mass of the earth at that remote period, before those many millions of years throughout which the earth has been gathering year by year hundreds of millions of meteoric masses.

Now, with a larger and less dense orb, a slower rotation rate — probably a rotation rate very much slower — would have sufficed to cause the earth to part with matter from its equatorial regions, where, of course, the centrifugal tendencies resulting from over-rapid rotation would be most pronounced.

I have been in the habit during the last ten years of pointing out when lecturing on the moon that she probably had her origin as part of the vaporous or partly vaporous mass whence the earth also was formed, and that to this origin she owed the peculiar rotational motion which keeps the same face ever directed towards the earth. I can see nothing in Mr. Darwin's researches which should lead us to forsake this, the most natural interpretation of the moon's origin; on the contrary, the vast duration of the past periods necessary for the increase of the moon's distance from actual contact with the earth to her present orbit, and for the increase of the terrestrial day from three hours to twenty-four, suffices of itself to assure us that the earth at that remote time must have been in great part vaporous. The giant planets also, as I have already hinted, tell the same story, for though they have thrown off their moons — Saturn perhaps has not quite finished the work — they are still, as we can see from their small density and their aspect, in great part vaporous. When they were beginning the work of moon-formation, many tens of millions of years ago, they were, we may be sure, still hotter, and therefore a much larger portion of their mass was vaporous.

But it is the manner of the moon's birth, as suggested by Mr. Darwin (Dr. Ball accepting the suggestion as probably sound), which seems to me least likely to

accord with the probable manner of the moon's generation, and also to correspond least with a *posteriori* evidence.

Mr. Darwin pictures the earth rotating once in three hours, with a double tidal wave (a wave affecting the fluid substance of her entire mass), raised by solar action. Such a wave, synchronizing with what may be called the pulsation period of the earth (with the dimensions she then had), would get higher and higher, just as a pendulum, receiving a succession of minute but well-timed impulses, swings farther and farther, until at length cohesion would no longer be possible, and the mass out of which the moon was one day to be formed was thrown off. The considerations I have indicated above would not affect this reasoning; they would only modify our views as to the size and condition of the earth when the moon's mass was thus liberated, and therefore as to the rate of the earth's rotation spin at the time, and the period of the moon's first free revolution. But there is a more important consideration, now to be taken into account, which forbids us, I think, to believe that the moon's mass was thus thrown off, as it were, at a single effort. The monstrous tidal pulsation which would undoubtedly take place under the conditions described, would inevitably lead to the throwing off of a small mass long before it had attained swing enough, so to speak, to throw off such a mass as the moon's—one eighty-first part of the entire mass of the earth. Most probably, too, the crests of each tidal wave would throw off a mass of matter at about the same time, forming, for the time, two small moons instead of one large one. Still more probably, in my opinion, the crest of each wave would scatter cosmic spray rather than a single great globular mass. After each wave had thus swollen and eventually burst into spray, it would gradually subside for a while, the solar tidal impulses no longer quite synchronizing with the earth's tidal pulsation; but presently the waves would begin to grow again, would flow larger and larger, until again a flight of small masses would be flung from the summit of each. Again and again the process would be repeated, until at length the earth's constantly changing rotation rate would cause the sun's tidal action no longer to synchronize with the earth's pulsation period. Then, and then only, the earth would cease to throw off cosmical spray.

Now what would be the condition of the matter thus thrown off, and what its

subsequent behavior? Each particle, each globule of molten matter, would behave just as the moon, according to the theory we are considering, has actually behaved. It would begin from the first moment of its separate existence to retreat slowly from the earth. Long before the tidal wave had again grown sufficiently high to throw off spray, the spray last thrown off would have passed beyond its reach. Again, each of the tiny globules thus thrown off from the earth would at first travel nearly in the plane of the earth's equator (later influences would modify this relation considerably). Thrown off with slightly varying directions and degrees of velocity, the bodies expelled on opposite sides at one of these earth-spasms, would before long have spread themselves all around the earth, some gaining on the main body, others losing. Probably before the next flights of cosmical spray left the earth, the bodies last thrown off would form a tolerably uniform very narrow ring around the earth.

This process would have continued between certain definite epochs—the first being the time when the earth's rotation began to approach to synchronism with her pulsation period,* the last being the time when there began to be no sufficient approach to synchronism (in the mid-interval only would there have been perfect synchronism). This period must have lasted for a very long time—probably for millions of years. When it was over, what was the condition of the matter which had been thrown off from the earth's mass? Manifestly it must have formed at that time a series of close concentric rings of tiny satellites. Probably the rings were so close that, though each was very narrow, they formed a continuous flat and rather broad ring. But, whether this were so or not, it is certain that the outermost and innermost ring of the series would form the boundary circles of a flat and rather broad ring system of small bodies, closely resembling in appearance (as seen from a great distance) the Saturnian ring system, and having a real structure precisely like that which the researches of Benjamin Peirce and the Bonds in America, of Clerk Maxwell and others in this country, have proved that the Saturnian ring system actually has.

* That is the period of vibration of her mass after any impulse (affecting the whole earth) had been received from without. The earth would as certainly have had such a pulsation period as the vibrating substance of a bell has.

It seems to me, on the one hand, so clear that the process suggested (with great plausibility) by Mr. Darwin and Dr. Ball must really have taken place in such a manner as to produce a ring such as I have described, and, on the other hand, it is so certain that the Saturnian ring system is of this nature, that I feel persuaded we have here been led — by paths along two lines of research, each of great difficulty, apparently tending in very different directions — to the explanation of the mystery of Saturn's rings, and of the much deeper mystery of the origin of worlds and moons. Sixteen years ago, in the preface to my treatise on "Saturn and its System" (my first work), I pointed out that probably in the study of the Saturnian rings we might find an interpretation of the manner in which the solar system itself had been developed. My prediction, if such it can be called, has not been exactly fulfilled, though the relationship I indicated between the two problems has been confirmed. For, instead of the study of the Saturnian ring system having thrown light (except reflected light) on the origin of worlds and moons, it would seem as though the study of the origin of the moon had thrown light on the Saturnian rings.

Be this as it may, there can be very little question, I believe, that the moon was not formed at a single effort, as Dr. Ball has suggested, but that a series of rings was first formed, constituting a single flat ring system. The formation of the moon from such a system of rings would result from the gradual process by which the number of the minute bodies forming the ring system would be reduced by collisions. If the ring system was (as seems probable) immersed at the beginning, and for a long time, in the vaporous outskirts of the earth, this process would be less slow than it otherwise would have been. Satellite after satellite would coalesce with neighboring satellites; probably, centres of aggregation would be formed, which would absorb wandering satellites in the ring system still more effectively. Every combination of the kind, by changing the period of revolution of the mass thus formed (for at every collision there would be a loss of *vis viva*) would tend to hasten the change of the ring system into a single orb. It is no new idea that such a process as this took place, no mere attempt to reconcile new results with views previously entertained. The occurrence of such changes as I have here described was indicated by me six-

teen years ago, in my treatise on Saturn (p. 126), and it was there shown that changes in the appearance of the rings, and probably the recent development of the inner dark ring, may be due to processes of this kind — collisions among the satellites, and consequent loss of *vis viva* by the entire system.

The formation of the moon, whether in this manner, which appears to me much the more probable, or as a single catastrophic event, must have occurred at so remote a period that the earth's rotation (carrying back over this enormous interval of time the process of retardation which has certainly been in progress) must, when the moon was first formed, have been much more rapid than at present. The moon's period of revolution, also, must have been very much shorter than it now is. From and after that era, the processes of change must have been those which Mr. Darwin has described, and which Dr. Ball has pictured (with coloring in some parts perhaps *tant soit peu* exaggerated). We have no occasion to explain, as the latter *savant* does, how the earth's frame recovered from the shock of the moon's genesis, or how the scar left on her then plastic surface, where the moon's mass had left her, was presently healed by the "gentle ministrations" of the mutual attraction of the particles forming her substance;* for no such scar would ever, according to our view, have marred the fair surface of the earth. But subsequent changes would have been the same in whichever of these two ways — the sudden or the gradual — we suppose the moon to have been formed.

According to either view, it is by no means clear that the moon's rotation period would have been the same as her period of revolution around the earth, as is now the case. But it is certain, that from the beginning of her existence as an independent orb, the moon must have been at work in raising a tidal wave, and at first far more actively even than now. Not only would she have raised a higher wave, because nearer to the earth, even had the earth been then what it is now; but since the earth must then have been in great part fluid, the moon would from the beginning do what the sun had for countless ages been doing — she would

* "By these gentle ministrations," says Dr. Ball, "the wound on the earth would soon be healed. In the lapse of time, the earth would become as whole as ever, and at last it would not retain even a scar to testify to the mighty catastrophe."

raise
whol
owin
tidal
sity
tha
like
retar
much
of th
be ac
of th
the
these
earth
mass
simil
then
occup
woul
A mi
matte
direc
was
ually
earth
rapid
to th
case,
distan
rotati
both
more
comb
distan
Onl
going
ishing
moon
reacti
ishing
The r
produ
work,
work
synch
the e
could
face v
the m
theref
spin.
any w
moon
nearly
still s
rotati
ing, a
under
were
moved
tem, t

raise, like him, a tidal wave affecting the whole fluid substance of the earth; and, owing to her much greater proximity, the tidal wave she thus raised must of necessity have been very much greater than that raised by the sun. This tidal wave, like that now raised by the moon, would retard the earth's rotational spin, and much more effectively. The retardation of the earth's spin would then, as now, be accompanied by a gradual retardation of the moon's motion, and recession of the moon from the earth. And while these changes were taking place, the earth, by her attraction on the then fluid mass of the moon, would be producing similar effects. The moon (supposing her then to have rotated in less time than she occupied in revolving round the earth) would be acted upon tidally by the earth. A mighty wave of fluid or at least plastic matter would circle around the moon in a direction contrary to that in which she was rotating; she would, therefore, gradually lose her rotational spin, just as the earth was losing hers, only at a more rapid rate. The reaction corresponding to this action would be, in the earth's case, as in the moon's, shown by increased distance. In other words, the earth's rotation and the moon's rotation would both be reduced in rate, the moon's the more rapidly, and both changes would combine reactionally in increasing the distance separating the two bodies.

Only one of these processes is now going on — the moon's action is diminishing the earth's rotational spin (and the moon's distance is therefore increasing by reaction), the earth's action is not diminishing the rotational spin of the moon. The reason why the latter action no longer produces any effect is that it has done its work, it no longer has anything left to work upon. The moon's rotation now synchronizes with her revolution around the earth, there is no tidal wave (there could be none if the moon's entire surface were covered by ocean, or even if the moon's entire mass were fluid), and therefore there is no loss of rotational spin. I have said the earth no longer has any work to do so far as modifying the moon's rotation is concerned. This is nearly true, but not quite. The earth has still some work to do, in preventing the rotation rate of the moon from diminishing, as it would otherwise tend to do, under the sun's action. If the earth were suddenly destroyed, or rather removed entirely away from the solar system, the moon would continue to travel

around the sun, in a path very little changed from that which she at present follows, and, by such wave motion as the sun can produce in the moon's mass, he would tend slowly to diminish her rate of rotation. The neighborhood of the earth prevents any such change from occurring, and would do so, even if the sun could raise a large tidal wave in deep lunar seas or in the moon's entire mass. It will be seen presently that this is a consideration of some importance. There is also some work for the earth to do — though it is but slight — in diminishing the moon's rate of rotation so as to correspond exactly with the slow, gradual increase in her period of revolution. Students of the moon could well wish this were otherwise, so that the farther side of the moon, which we never see, might come, however slowly, into our ken.

The earth, then, acting on the moon caused the moon to adopt that mode of motion which we recognize in her, turning once on her axis while she revolves once around the earth. In this peculiarity of the moon's motion we recognize one piece of evidence, which of itself is absolutely convincing, as to the vastness of the time-intervals which have elapsed since the moon first began her independent existence. Whatever the moon's original rotation period may have been it was certainly very much shorter than her present rotation period. If we suppose it identical originally with her period of revolution there would have been an enormous amount of work for the earth to do in gradually reducing the period to its present value — both periods, in point of fact, simultaneously. We have, then, to carry back the earth's history so far that, independently of all other evidence to that effect, we find ourselves forced to accept the conclusion that, at the beginning of the separate existence of earth and moon, our earth was a globe rotating much more rapidly than at present and much nearer to the moon.

And here the question arises whether we can find in this inference any explanation of the undoubted discrepancy between the teachings of geology and those of astronomy as to the earth's age. On the one hand the study of the earth's crust tells us of one hundred millions of years at the very least during which the earth has been the scene of changes such as are now in progress, chiefly — one may say, altogether — under solar influence. On the other hand, regarding the sun's emission of heat as resulting, in the main,

from the contraction of his mass, we find that, assuming his density uniform, or nearly so, the contraction of his mass to its present dimensions, even from a former infinite extension, would have resulted only in generating as much heat as would last, at the present rate of emission, about twenty millions of years. We do not gain by supposing the rate of emission less in former ages of the earth, for then, the rate of solar work on the earth being less, the length of time necessary to complete the work which has actually been done would have been proportionately greater.

The difficulty is very serious. Dr. Croll, who was one of the first to call attention to it, suggested the explanation, which I take to be inconceivable, that our sun was generated by the collision of several orbs which had been rushing through space with enormous velocity, and that his supply of heat represents the energy of those rushing suns, as well as that resulting from compression. My own solution of the difficulty is one which is confirmed by other researches, including an important investigation by Mr. G. Darwin, that the sun is not of nearly uniform density throughout his apparent globe, but that he is enormously compressed towards the centre, and that, in point of fact, the surface we see lies very far above the real surface of the sun.

Dr. Ball believes that in the former proximity of the moon we may find a complete answer to the enigma. In the primitive oceans, he says, the moon raised tides as she does now, but when she was nearer the tides were much higher than at present. For instance, when the moon's distance was but forty thousand miles, or, roughly, a sixth of her present distance, her tide-raising power was not six times, but two hundred and sixteen (six times six times six) times greater than at present. So far Dr. Ball's reasoning is sound; but I cannot follow him in saying that therefore, the tides would have been two hundred and sixteen times as high as at present. (There is no such simple relation as this between tide-producing energy and the height of the tidal wave.) Still, we may admit that the tides were very much higher then than now.

These mighty tides [says Dr. Ball] are the gift which astronomers have now made to the working machinery of the geologist. They constitute an engine of terrific power to aid in the great work of geology. What would the puny efforts of water in other ways accomplish when compared with the majestic tides

and the great currents they produce? In the great primeval tides will probably be found the explanation of what has long been a reproach to geology. The early palæozoic rocks form a stupendous mass of ocean-made beds, which, according to Professor Williamson, are twenty miles thick up to the top of the Silurian beds. It has long been a difficulty to conceive how such a gigantic quantity of material could have been ground up and deposited at the bottom of the sea. The geologists said, "The rivers and other agents of the present day will do it if you give them time enough." But, unfortunately, the mathematicians and the natural philosophers would not give them time enough. The mathematicians had other reasons for believing that the earth could not have been so old as the geologists demanded. Now, however, the mathematicians have discovered the new and stupendous tidal grinding engine. With this powerful aid the geologists can get through their work in a reasonable period of time, and the geologists and the mathematicians may be reconciled.

I am disposed to doubt seriously whether mathematicians and astronomers have done more than to somewhat alleviate the pressure of the difficulty we are considering. That they have subtracted somewhat from the work which had formerly been assigned to the sun must be admitted. We need not inquire what the former height of the tides, or to discuss the action of the tidal wave in detail. If we consider only that the tidal wave, according to the very theory we are considering, has, by its reaction against the earth, reduced the earth's rotation spin from a rate of one rotation in perhaps not more than three hours, certainly not more than six, to one rotation only in twenty-four hours, we see that the work done on the earth's crust must have been enormous. It represents the friction products, so to speak, of all that work. The wonder might rather be that the ocean-made beds are not much thicker than they are, than that they are so thick. But here is our difficulty returning to us in another form. Is it clear that the beds considered by Dr. Ball were not made subsequently to the time when the moon was at the comparatively small distance he mentions? Can we for a moment imagine that the tremendous work of checking the earth's rotation spin to less than a quarter of what it was, has only left such traces as these? Must not that work have been done while still the greater part of the earth's mass was fluid, and the water tidal wave have begun its work long after? Geologists have other reasons than the thick, ocean-made strata for their belief in

the vast periods of time which form the great difficulty of the problem. There is the evidence derived from the study of organic matter, the evidence derived from the remains of once living creatures — animal and vegetable. The moon might have raised a tidal wave as high as Chimborazo without hastening the progress of what may be called the development of the earth — nay, she would very seriously have checked this progress. It may be doubted, even, whether life, belonging to any save the lower forms, could have existed during the time when such tidal waves as Dr. Ball pictures careered round the swiftly rotating globe.

It remains to be noticed that, though the day will continually increase as the moon recedes, and, *vice versa*, the length of the month, measured in days, attained long since its maximum. It was then — some millions of years ago — about twenty-nine days long, and is now but twenty-seven and one-third days, as days are now. As the moon recedes, the lunar month — which is also the moon's day — will contain fewer and fewer of our terrestrial days. For our day grows longer, now, at a greater rate than the lunar month increases. Our day will continue to grow longer and longer as the moon recedes. In one hundred and fifty millions of years, or thereabouts, our day will be about one thousand four hundred of our present hours long; this period, also, will then be that in which the moon circles around the earth — about fifty-eight and one-third of our present days. Dr. Ball goes on to consider how the sun would affect this state of things. There would be a tide raised by the sun on the earth after the moon had ceased to raise any tide (the earth's rotation exactly synchronizing with the moon's revolution); and, as a result of this, Dr. Ball says, that the earth would begin to rotate in a longer time than the moon circles round her. It appears to me that the moon's action would check any tendency of this sort, just as the earth's action on the moon has, as we know, prevented the moon from rotating in a longer period than that of her revolution round the earth. The state of compromise with a moon circling once in one thousand four hundred hours round the earth rotating in the same time, the moon also so rotating, would be, I believe, a state of stable equilibrium. It is not a very pleasant future to look forward to. Fortunately it is very remote.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

LIVING AGE. VOL. XXXVII. 1924

From Fraser's Magazine.

THE POETRY OF DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

THE lyric poet has many outlets for the application of his special powers; he may express himself in the song, the ode, the sonnet, and the various forms of the ballad. If the narrative tendency is strong, and possessed along with an unflagging power over varied cadences and subtle and elaborate harmonies, then the lyric narrator may blossom into full fruition as an allegorist or a master of epic story. When we think of Spenser and Milton we directly associate them with "The Faerie Queene" and "Paradise Lost" respectively; but it is an easy transition that leads us back to the sweet fluency of the "Echo Song," or the dainty notes in the "Calendar" that celebrate "faire Elisa." It is superfluous to say a word as to the perfect movement of Shakespeare's narratives, or as to the majestic measures of his songs and sonnets, but we may reasonably regret that the fashion of his time did not induce him to write an ode. Then surely had there been such a clang and interchange of instruments, such triumphant surging floods and quiet expressive rills of perfect music, as it would have done the world good to hear! At the same time, a great poet's genuine strength is usually best seen in his own favorite way of expressing himself. Dryden's inimitable ode, for example, is such an accidental and exceptional product of his genius that Gray is warranted in speaking of him simply as the master of the heroic couplet, driving his

Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder cloth'd, and long-resounding pace.

Gray himself is known only to the student as the author of exquisite odes and that delicately finished sonnet of his on the death of Richard West; to the average reader of poetry he is simply the writer of the wonderful elegy. So it is with Cowper and Thomson, both of whom did work in key and form different from the sober and stately blank verse by which they are popularly known. It is the same with the great poets of the present century. Shelley, for example, is well-nigh forgotten as a sonneteer, and even Wordsworth is rapidly coming to be thought of as simply a writer of elaborate didactic blank verse. It is unnecessary to speak of Coleridge, Southey, and Byron, all of whom are quietly becoming the special property of the professional literary man. To the

quick observer the process is seen going on in our own time, and it would perhaps not be difficult to predict from what works posterity will quote when they speak of Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Browning, Mr. William Morris, and Mr. Swinburne. Let us note, however, in passing, that the popular verdict in such matters is not necessarily the true one, especially if (as in the cases of Milton and Wordsworth, as well as several living poets) the writer has shown decided power in various provinces of his art.

Such a forecast as that just indicated would be particularly difficult as yet in reference to Mr. Rossetti. His poetry has been before the world for something like twelve years altogether, while it is only now, from the two volumes just issued (with much work entirely fresh, and of great importance), that a fair judgment can be formed as to his matured expression. He challenges attention as a sonneteer, a writer of ballads, and of narrative and reflective lyrics. One is not surprised, after a perusal of his poems in various forms, to find that he has not tried the ode. We are not more ready to regret that Shakespeare never attempted an ode than we are to acquit Mr. Rossetti of the task. His passion is incapable of rising into great billowy surges, and rolling forward in tempestuous harmonies; nor is his power over pathos adapted to the delicate and penetrating tenderness of the lonely flute. One could not possibly imagine Mr. Rossetti sitting up all night, and producing in the morning a triumphant ode for a Handel by-and-by to set worthily to music. The ode demands impulse of genius, quick, energetic fervor, mastery of rapid transition, and a comprehensive sense of multitudinous movements, as well as a clear perception of delicate, single effects. Mr. Rossetti's method is incapable of application to anything of this kind. His work is characterized by intellectual subtlety, calm dignity of emotional reference, and pungent ideal sympathy, rather than by depth and overflow of feeling, and storm and majesty of passion; while it is marked by patient elaboration and exquisite grace of finish rather than by strength of structural design and massive grandeur of form and feature. It is by the assiduous cultivation of such powers as are clearly indicated by workmanship of this kind that Mr. Rossetti has at length proved himself to be one of the finest poetical artists in our literature, and particularly one of the few really great sonneteers.

It is as useless to talk of the gratuitous limitation of the sonnet as it would be (and why should it not as well be?) to keep harping upon the particular fashion of any structure whatever, whether artistic or mechanical. It is no fault of a sonnet that it is not something else—it is not, for example, discreditable to it that it cannot be sung, or declaimed, or used piecemeal by the exhibitor of "literary beauties," and the like—but it is distinctly meritorious that the genuine specimen should be instantly discernible, shining forth a perfect diamond with indubitable fascination of purity and symmetrical grace. Let it be, of course, an English sonnet, if the preference is for that form, and the result in the hands of a true master of his art will be a beautiful and perfect English sonnet, for which the reader of poetry, according to his measure of insight and appreciation, will have reason to be duly thankful. On the other hand, given the construction of a sonnet according to the Petrarchan model, with its much older pedigree, and the worthy poetical craftsman will, without fail, produce that as his taste and strength may direct him. Mr. Rossetti works at the sonnet in the spirit of the true lover of his art. The architectural features of every separate unity are marked by deliberation, judgment, finish, taste, and chaste elaboration. There is no loose grouping of detached fragments of masonry, with indolent trust that somehow they will fit into one another and produce a harmonious result. On the contrary, even a slight analysis will show how interdependent are the different parts of the structure, and how well rounded and compact is the entire composition. As Mr. Rossetti himself well says,—

A sonnet is a moment's monument,—
Memorial from the soul's eternity
To one dead deathless hour.

Acting upon this idea—and perhaps, too, influenced in some measure by the existence of the "*Vita Nuova*" of his remote godfather—the poet has worked out a sonnet sequence which he calls "*The House of Life*." The different members of this remarkable canticle are so many moments' monuments, while the whole is a transcript of the soul's experience in its more or less successful endeavors after an ideal. An attitude of philosophic melancholy—a wooing of despair—is characteristic of the traditional sonneteer. He is Narcissus by the fountain; he is perpetually fascinated by the reflection or the

projection of himself; his lady continues to elude his fond grasp, and to send thrills of painful regret and disappointment down through his bosom. Mr. Rossetti has adopted so far the recognized formality of attitude, and the first part of the work in particular (entitled "Youth and Change") is charged with devoted enthusiasm, and weighted with rich and luscious imagery. The elaborate figurative rapture will now and then, as in the great Old Testament canticle, the Song of Solomon, startle, and even shock the unwary reader when off his guard for a moment, and forgetful of allegorical reference. This may happen when, for example, the poet tells how his lady and himself are suddenly revealed to each other by Love, who continues master of the situation, as

Now, shadowed by his wings, our faces yearn
Together;

or again, as he tells of the rapture that comes when

In the dusk hours, (we two alone),
Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies;

or, as he makes the apparently weak confession that his lady's lips had just been forming with his "such consonant interlude" as Orpheus, no doubt, was longing for when his impatience destroyed his chances forever. Then the entire sonnet of "Supreme Surrender," to say nothing of many more, both in general conception and particular details, is so loaded with ornamental, amorous conceits that its real motive and purpose are at first reading apt to be obscured. This consideration, as well as the extremely fine and subtle character of the prevalent allegory, will certainly militate against the popularity of Mr. Rossetti's sonnet canticle. It was one of the triumphs of the author of "Euphues" that he could commend his romantic treatise to the diligent perusal of young ladies, with a confident belief that they would not misunderstand him. It is questionable whether one could with similar confidence propose the study of "The House of Life" to the same class of readers. Would it not need considerable precautionary comment before reading aloud to a mixed audience such lines as these from the tercets of "Youth's Spring Tribute"?—

But April's sun strikes down the glades to-day;
So shut your eyes upturned, and feel my kiss
Creep, as the Spring now thrills through every
spray,
Up your warm throat to your warm lips.

Two considerations must, of course, affect the verdict as to the prevalence of this warm and rather enervating imagery—the first, that the poet is occupying a representative attitude as the interpreter (too candid, perhaps, and too indifferent to the feelings of the lady) in the touching mystery of love's young dream; and the second, that he is allegorizing. Bearing this in mind we shall have less anxiety about the feelings of ladies in the matter, and we shall with perfect propriety dismiss the thought of mixed audiences altogether. Mr. Rossetti writes for the intelligent and the sympathetic; his readers must not dwell with commonplace interpretation at all, but they must be able to grasp the fact that these things are a mystery. So understanding the poet's attitude, they will see that "The House of Life" is a work of remarkable ingenuity and elaboration. It follows the human soul from the time of its dim, early efforts after perfection through ideal duality, onward through the wild phase of passionate enthusiasm, to the awakened sobriety and chastened calm of that reflective period when absolute possession is found to be impossible, and the only relief to weary memories is "the one hope's one name" that lasts while the soul itself has individuality. The sonnets are not all of equal beauty, either of form or sentiment; but they are one and all remarkable for intellectual subtlety, terse and vigorous emotional purpose, and evenness and grace of movement. Sometimes, as in the various details of the following on "Silent Noon," delicate glimpses of outward nature are given with singular felicity and nicety of touch. There is a gentle *susurrus* breathing over this description, while the dragon-fly is introduced with wonderful picturesqueness and truthfulness of detail:—

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass,—
The finger-points look through like rosy
blooms:
Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams
and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.

All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
Are golden kingcup fields with silver edge
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn
hedge.
Tis visible silence, still as the hourglass.

Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-
fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the
sky:—

So this wing'd hour is dropt to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companioned inarticulate hour
When twofold silence was the song of love.

There are several minor sequences within the main work, wherein, as it were, the momentary mood is clung to and lingered over, and the transcripts occupy two or three successive sonnets. Such are "Willowwood" and three charming sonnets on "True Woman" in Part I., and "The Choice," "Old and New Art," "The Sun's Shame," and "Newborn Death," in Part II. These sub-movements lend variety and interest to the theme, which, as now elaborated, contains an important embodiment of a philosophical theory. As a specimen of the sober manner, after life's morning march is over and the spirit is no longer young, let us take this vision of Lady Beauty seen by the eye to which experience has given force of penetration and thoroughness of insight:—

Under the arch of Life, where love and death,
Terror and mystery, guard her shrine, I saw
Beauty enthroned; and though her gaze struck awe,
I drew it in as simply as my breath.
Hers are the eyes which, over and beneath,
The sky and sea bend on thee,—which can draw,
By sea or sky or woman, to one law,
The allotted bondman of her palm and wreath.

This is that Lady Beauty, in whose praise
Thy voice and hand shake still,—long known to thee
By flying hair and fluttering hem,—the beat
Following her daily of thy heart and feet,
How passionately and irretrievably,
In what fond flight, how many ways and days!

Lastly, is there not a terrible force, an uncompromising, almost Calvinistic blast of woful doom in this, entitled "Vain Virtues," which comes still further on in the reflective period?—

What is the sorriest thing that enters Hell?
None of the sins,—but this and that fair deed
Which a soul's sin at length could supersede.
These yet are virgins, whom death's timely knell
Might once have sainted; whom the fiends compel
Together now, in snake-bound shuddering sheaves
Of anguish, while the pit's pollution leaves
Their refuse maidenhood abominable.

Night sucks them down, the tribute of the pit,
Whose names, half entered in the book of Life,
Were God's desire at noon. And as their hair
And eyes sink last, the Torturer deigns no whit
To gaze, but, yearning, waits his destined wife,
The Sin still blithe on earth that sent them there.

"The House of Life" is a standing answer to those that carp at the sonnet on the ground of its mechanical limitations and its little narrowness and general futility. We may object to Mr. Rossetti's method, we may feel that the hill air is an indispensable antidote to his moving and relaxing strains, we may say that he is simply wasting words for the sake of warm glow and rich color; but all that will not affect the excellent structure and the undoubted vitality of these sonnets. They form a unique and valuable contribution to our poetic literature, and their essential value rests on their beautiful form and the deep and true character of the embodied thought. Within the narrow compass of each duly limited entity, the poet has managed to insert a clear idea, well formulated and graced with illustrative material, and certain to be suggestive of long distances to the reflective reader. The same qualities characterize the poems, and especially (in this connection) several short lyrics of singular beauty. Mr. Rossetti lays his spell upon some apparently chance thought or trifling incident, and the result is found in such transfigured loveliness as characterizes "The Woodspurge," "Love-Lily," "Sudden Light," with its

grass beyond the door,
The sweet keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

His philosophy finds impulse in a neglected spray of honeysuckle, or lingers over the coming possibilities of a young fir wood, or grapples (in "The Sea-Limits") with the "sea's listless chime"—

Time's self it is made audible,—
The murmur of the earth's own shell.

This quick observing power and nimbleness of transfiguring method are still further exemplified in the longer poems, in which, moreover, the poet's quaint idiosyncrasy of choice is invariably a striking feature. To one that knows the poetical attitude manifested in the sonnets it will be apparent that such themes as "The Blessed Damozel," "Dante at Verona,"

"The Stream's Secret," "Love's Nocturn," and others are in keeping with it, and that they are besides such as Mr. Rossetti may fairly claim by right of supreme prerogative. When we learn, for example, that

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven,

we know that we are listening to the student and modern interpreter of Dante; and then comes a pleasing thrill as we are told of her bold outlook into space and the cosmical sweep of her gaze. The vast grandeur of this is unusually stimulating to the imagination:—

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

"The Stream's Secret" is one of the most finely idealized and tenderly touching of English love poems. It is the sonneteer under a new aspect, but with motive and aim unchanged. He commits his secret, in the good old-fashioned style, to the stream that flows by, in hopes that he may thus win gently into the presence of his distant love; and the result, of course, is the gradual awakening of the poet and the quiet, industrious indifference of the stream. The conception is very fine, and the elaboration both of thought and imagery singularly beautiful and effective. Listen to the onomatopœic expressiveness of the closing stanza, and note the steady gradation of effects. One knows how water laps and sways and rolls, with mysterious significance, on over some comparative level to its remote destination; but one does not always get, along with the perception, the grave movement of a pathetic experience:—

O water whispering
Still through the dark into mine ears,—
As with mine eyes, is it not now with hers?—
Mine eyes that add to thy cold spring,
Wan water, wandering water weltering,
This hidden tide of tears.

The same quickness of outlook and readiness of sympathy that enable the poet to dwell upon such exceptional topics as have been mentioned account for

his interest in Jenny, the very mention of whose name shocked the propriety of Mrs. Quickly. It is an experience of a novel and memorable kind to read of

Lazy laughing languid Jenny,
Fond of a kiss and fond of a guinea,

and to come with the poet from her room at the opening dawn, with the piercing twitter of the awaking sparrows and the sounds of the new day in one's ears. Similarly one would not like to miss the potent weirdness and the magic witchery of "Troy Town" and "Eden Bower," nor the fascinating spell that lures into the vengeful presence of "Sister Helen." Those who know how the witch in "Macbeth" could make her victim "peak and pine" will understand the allusion in this:—

"Why did you melt your waxen man,
Sister Helen?

To-day is the third since you began."

"The time was long, yet the time ran,
Little brother."

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Three days to-day, between Hell and Heaven!*)

It is a story of revenge, unsurpassed in steadiness and directness of purpose, firm, unswerving grip of fell circumstance coercive of tragical destiny, and realistic presentation of heart-rending sighs and shadowy utterances from the borderlands of woe. These poems, together with the majestic "Burden of Nineveh"—the poet's lofty meditation on the winged bull brought to the British Museum some years ago—"Stratton Water," and "The Staff and Scrip," may be conveniently grouped along with the three that Mr. Rossetti himself specializes as ballads—"Rose Mary," "The White Ship," and "The King's Tragedy." These all exhibit workmanship of a very high order, and still further illustrate the poet's mastery of what is quaint, weird, and mysterious. In this particular department of poetic interpretation Mr. Rossetti stands very much alone; he holds the monopoly of spells, charms, and mythical influences, or, at any rate, his seizure and presentation of them are so thoroughly individual, and at the same time so forcible and graphic, that there is probably no feature of his work by which in time to come he will be more readily identified. He has entered upon Coleridge's ground—a perilous enterprise enough—and the difference of attitude and method, as well as the specialities of success characteristic of each, will, doubtless, form an interesting study for those acquainted with the

two poets. No one in our day has written ballads like these, which, as with the great legendary ballads, owe their success very much to the presence of the grim and mysterious fatalistic influences which the poet grasps with such energetic and diffusive potency. The beryl-stone is the magic centre of "Rose Mary," in which, while describing a thrilling interview between a mother and a daughter over the discovery of the daughter's fatal secret, Mr. Rossetti rises as near as ever he does to true natural feeling and great surges of passion. In "The White Ship" the poet tells the legendary story of the drowning of King Henry's son and daughter, the fatal power at work in this instance being the king's own tyrannical tendency and the natural reward of its mysterious but righteous overthrow. The twofold refrain of the first stanza strikes the key-note of the piece —

Lands are swayed by a king on a throne.

The sea hath no king but God alone.

"The King's Tragedy" tells with masterly power and rare rapidity and energy of movement the assassination of King James I. of Scotland; and here Mr. Rossetti finds in Scottish superstition an excellent opportunity for the exercise of his special method. His weird woman is appropriately introduced, and her activities are always apposite and telling. The energy and the penetrating thrill of these stanzas are exceedingly forcible and effective: —

And now beneath the window arose

A wild voice suddenly:

And the king reared straight, but the queen
fell back

As for bitter dule to dree;

And all of us knew the woman's voice
Who spoke by the Scottish Sea.

"O king," she cried, "in an evil hour

They drove me from thy gate;

And yet my voice must rise to thine ears;
But alas! it comes too late!

"Last night at mid-watch, by Aberdour,

When the moon was dead in the skies,

O king, in a death-light of thine own
I saw thy shape arise.

"And in full season, as erst I said,

The doom had gained its growth;

And the shroud had risen above thy neck
And covered thine eyes and mouth.

"For every man on God's ground, O king,

His death grows up from his birth

In a shadow-plant perpetually;

And thine towers high, a black yew-tree
O'er the Charterhouse of Perth!"

That room was built far out from the house;

And none but we in the room

Might hear the voice that rose beneath,

Nor the tread of the coming doom.

As already said, it would be difficult at present to estimate how Mr. Rossetti is likely to stand with posterity, but there is no difficulty whatever in giving judgment so far. The subtle intricacies and the frequently delicate fibre of his sonnets, together with their highly colored and sometimes slightly fantastic imagery, may prevent them from striking the popular taste; while the grace, the rapid and vigorous movement of at any rate several of his ballads, and their weird significance, will hardly fail to impress even the average imagination. Still, he will be above all a poet's poet; and it is as yet impossible and unnecessary to say whether, with his fit audience, he will be more cherished as a writer of ballads or a graceful sonneteer.

THOMAS BAYNE.

From The Saturday Review.

MARCH IN THE COUNTRY.

WE know not whether March may go out like a lamb, but assuredly it has not come in like a lion. Instead of blustering winds and bitter morning frosts, everything in its opening days was soft and springlike. The gardens were almost gay with spring flowers; the shrubberies and copses were budding and shooting; the clustering tufts of the yellow primroses were flowering thickly under the hedge-roots; and the birds, in a not unnatural delusion, were singing as if they were already in the middle of the spring. Of course the signs of the weather may prove fallacious; but it is pleasanter to hope that the genial winter may be followed by a summer tripping up the heels of spring; and we have prognostications that the hay crops may be mown in May, and that we may be in the height of the harvest in "the month of roses." But a mild March is a phenomenon in England, and we can hardly hope to escape the edge of the easterly winds; and the spells of inclemency that may probably be in store for us, by nipping the advanced promise of the vegetation, may blight our hopes as well and turn premature joy to lamentation. But in any case, and in spite of those detestable winds, we maintain that March, on the whole, is a pleasant month. We fully admit its ordinary drawbacks; but then they are more than compen-

sated by its pleasures. We know nothing more exhilarating than a bright March day in the country, when a brisk northerly breeze is blowing. Nature has been shaking herself out of her gloomy winter garments, and has been making those unobtrusive alterations in her toilet which are unmistakably suggestive of spring. The buds have been visibly thickening on the trees, as you see when you take a survey of the sky through the branches. The earlier plants are putting forth their leaves in the hedges, and the wild herbage is expanding on the sides of the ditches. A faint flush of yellowish green has been spreading over the wintry brown of the pastures. But it is on the ploughland that the special signs of March are most conspicuous, with the pleasant, earthy odors of the newly turned soil, and the cawing flights of keen-eyed rooks following in the trail of the plough or the harrow. The earth is being roughly awakened from its winter rest, and turned up to meet the caresses of the spring air and the sunshine; and it is so much the worse for the grubs and the worms. We know no prettier picture, whether sharply defined in a clear atmosphere or seen dimly through the haze of misty exhalations, than the long teams of sleek and well-groomed horses, moving with heavy, business-like tread to the blithe music of the bells on the harness; while the bleating of the flocks from some neighboring sheep-pee reminds us that the lambing-time has fairly begun.

Indeed March in our mind always associates itself with lambs and rookeries and yellow daffodils. Yet, whoever may enjoy the month, it can hardly bring much pleasure to the shepherd. He is over-weighted with incessant anxieties; has care for his companion whether sleeping or waking; and when he throws himself down to snatch some broken rest, must be ready to rouse himself at any moment from dreams of untimely additions to his responsibilities. It is true that all has been done that experience can suggest to render matters easy for the expectant or nursing mothers of the flock, and for the new-born lambs that are exposed to the many ailments of infancy. The sheep farm may probably lie on the bleak uplands; but the lambing-folds are in the most protected situation that can be found. They are in a quiet nook among the copses in the bottom of a valley; and the hurdles, thickly wadded and interwoven with straw, are backed up on the exposed quarters by a wall or a matted

hedge-row. Should the weather prove tolerably favorable, all ought to go well. But bitter gales, with driving sleet or hail, may search out the most sheltered corners; drenching rains may soak through the roughly thatched roof of straw or broom; or the snow may come heavily down with a falling thermometer, heaping itself in each angle in snowdrifts that must be dug through or cleared away. Then the mothers have as hard a time of it as their shepherd; while as for the lambs, they are landed in a world of sorrows. The feeblest of them, crumpled up and shivering, refuse to feed; and the shepherd has to turn dry-nurse to others, and carry them to the fire in his temporary shealing. In the course of a day or two, he may find more than sufficient occupation for himself and any number of handy apprentices. For of course, in such unfavorable circumstances, some of the mothers will perish in lamb-birth; and the helpless orphans must have permanent attention, when some bereaved ewe is not persuaded to adopt them. Should you come upon the shepherd at such a time, you will see a careworn man whose preoccupied manner is opposed to all your classical memories of pipes and leisurely love-making and the felicity of the pastoral life. Yet, if you chanced to revisit him in more genial weather, a week or two later, you might find him the very soul of cheerfulness. Thanks to the indefatigable energy and the practical knowledge which his master will substantially recognize, the anxious days have been tided over far better than he had expected. The few ewes that were lost perished through no fault of his; and the score of the surviving lambs is more than satisfactory. And as you heard the bleating of the flock when many a field away, now you may admire the graceful play of the lambkins, who are perpetually indulging in gambols, and giving each other backs at leapfrog, when they are not dragging at their mother's teats. If they do not grow up sleek and vigorous, it will certainly not be owing to neglect of their opportunities, though their juvenile spirits might scarcely be so buoyant could they look forward to the impending cropping of their tails.

From the bleating of the sheepfolds it is a natural and pleasant change to the cawing of the neighboring rookery. We know nothing more lively than a clamorous colony of rooks, when they are busied over the reconstruction of their nests for the season. The situation of any rookery

can hardly fail to be romantic, for the birds have settled in some groups of venerable trees, and there is pretty sure to be a quaint old mansion in their vicinity. For choice they appear to prefer the elms, although, failing elms, they will fall back upon oaks, ashes, or beeches. And the elm, if it has a sombre association with coffins, is the most picturesque of forest timber among the woodlands. And under the elms, where the grass has been killed down by the dripping from the boughs, and bestrewed with twigs that have fallen from the nests, there spring up great beds of the daffodils we have referred to, richly manured by the rooks of innumerable generations. The flaming patches of orange contrast brilliantly with the neutral tints of the leafless trees and of the brown sward. Barring the brightness of the daffodil beds, the scene may be somewhat sombre; but no one can say that it is otherwise than animated. If it is a crowded settlement, the cawing overhead is almost deafening, and nobody who had not been used to it from childhood could sleep through it for any length of time after sunrise in any chamber of the adjacent mansion. Though we may remark, on the other hand, that, should you have been nursed in the shadow of the rookwood, there is nothing like that noisy chorus for a soothing morning lullaby. And, if the noise is deafening, the movement is never-ending. Nor is there much unmeaning swooping or hovering, though the birds will flutter when they intend to perch. The intricate flight is thoroughly business-like, and each twist and turn has its definite object. Nor is there as much confusion in the crowd as you might suppose, seeing that each couple knows the way to its particular nest, and that each nest is being built with easy facilities of access. Except with the newly-mated birds of last year, it is seldom a case of construction; it is merely a question of repairing and redecorating, or of making certain improvements and additions. Be that as it may, where each bird is his own architect, and where instinct supplies the necessary inspiration, there is no kind of hesitation. There they are, fetching and carrying; coming home from the lawn

hard by, or from the more distant fallows, laden with turf, twigs, or the materials for plaster. And when they have gathered material enough for the moment, they go to work on their dwelling like skilled mechanics, though indulging in an amount of noise all the time that could never be tolerated among human artisans. When we have had enough of this lively spectacle of clamorous industry, we may change the scene, and take a stroll in the quiet shrubberies. The thrushes, as a rule, are not much behind the rooks in their mating and nest-building; but they always seem to take their family matters more easily. The cocks are at least equally fond of hearing their own melodious voices, which is very natural; but they take their pleasure cheerily, and keep it apart from their business. If it be drawing towards sunset, and should the weather be mild, and more especially after a warm shower, you may hear them singing from every tree-top and thicket. Yet probably the nest is far advanced or finished in some bush beneath; and in another week or so the mother will have settled to the hatching of her speckled eggs. As for the blackbird, who is in his way almost a more engaging, as he is a more mellow, songster than his congener, he is at least as musical in his tastes, and he has more leisure. With a reasonable apprehension of the late March frosts, which so often take the more impetuous thrush unawares, freezing the nestlings under the very feathers of the mother, he will not bethink himself of nesting for another fortnight or more; and, till the last gleams of light that fall through the tree-tops in the dusk fade out in the thickening darkness, you may still listen to the harmonious concerts of the shrubberies, all the more delightful after the dead silence of the winter, which was only broken by the song of the robin. The days will be brighter in April, the fields will be greener in May, and the woods in June will be rich in foliage; but it is in the more springlike intervals of a blustering March that we enjoy, and enjoy the more for our sense of its precariousness, the exhilarating foretaste of those more genial seasons.

END OF VOLUME CLII.



